

## Goals – Prologue

The ultimate goal of a survivalist/prepper is to survive, come what may. Depending on a person's circumstances, the preps can be minimal, limited or full blown with money being no cause for concern.

I bring you a story of two individual survivalists who worked together to complete their preparations, which were completed well ahead of when they were needed. Into the mix is another survival oriented person, their boss, who has unlimited money. He, by contrast, has a magnificent 10,000ft<sup>2</sup> shelter and everything he should need to outride almost anything.

There's more to survival than having a bomb shelter and all that goes with it. As with most of my stories, the guns will be familiar and the level of preparations for both groups are more than adequate. The primary difference is the mindset. It is said that money can't buy happiness. Can it buy survival? Perhaps it can, we shall see.

The unasked question is who ultimately fairs better, our prepper Ted and his friend Marty and their extended families or their boss, Mr. Harris, who has nearly everything, and his extended family and his security force. The answer should be obvious and I hope you enjoy their adventure. This is set in and around Midland, Texas, far enough south that cold shouldn't be much of a problem. All parties concerned are well supplied for most things, except for the vast quantities of fuel they will require.

All of my favorite firearms as well as some I don't like are represented. The best rifle in the world isn't worth anything if you don't know how to use it. You all know what I have, M1A Loaded with 20½ magazines, a Mossberg 590A1, a Taurus PT1911B and that Model 38H Sauer & Sohn (built in 1938, s/n 262734) Nazi pistol in 7.65 Browning (32acp). It was the personal weapon of a Nazi officer, taken off him by Leroy Nelson after he killed him.

How much ammo do I have? Not enough of some and plenty of others. I have 2,880 rounds of SA, 500 rounds of 00 and 2,000 rounds of .45acp; 50/50 Lawman and Gold Dot. My radiation detection equipment is limited to the package from KI4U, extra dosimeters and extra KIO<sub>3</sub>. I have a box full of Mk 1 kits in case of a nerve gas attack.

We had 9 months of food on the shelf and come January will fill in the holes and bring it back up to 9 months and hopefully 12 months. We getting low on the two things you can never have too much off, coffee (18 cans) and toilet paper (150 rolls).

Had to reread Rainbow Bridge today. A stray, Chewy, who came to live with us 3 years ago got cancer and was dying. Just the tranquilizer the doc gave him was almost too much. You love them and then they leave before you do. Should have a whole pack waiting when we get there.

## Goals – Chapter 1

I had always liked firearms and over the years owned many, running from single action revolvers to pistols, rifles and the Remington 870 shotguns. Hard times lost my collection that was up to about 23 weapons. The collection didn't include the one rifle I wanted more than anything else, the M14. I saved as much of my paychecks as I could, but something always came up; a car repair, new tires, a broken TV and so forth. My goal was to accumulate a basic arsenal and I knew what I wanted, the M14, a tactical shotgun, an M1911 and a .22 pump action rifle.

So, I saved. Not all of the time, you know, Ammoman had Australian surplus and I loaded up. I bought 25 T-57 20-round magazines when I could get them cheap after the ban expired, new in the wrapper. I also bought 12-gauge 00 buck by the case occasionally and a brick of .22LR every time I went to Wally World. My Christmas bonus went into my savings account getting me closer.

After much thought, I ordered the one year food supply for one from Walton Feed; damn the freight was high, but, I was beginning to feel like a prepper. I went through my camping gear and added a second large dual fuel Coleman stove, a catalytic heater and another lantern. There was also a small stove in my butt pack that used alcohol tablets.

Mom died unexpectedly; they said she grieved herself to death over Dad dying. I cleaned out their apartment and sold off most of the stuff. Goodwill made out like a bandit. The only thing I kept was their relatively new TV and Mom's good china and real silverware. Among Dad's things, I found several uncirculated rolls of 1964 dimes, quarters and half dollars, a total of \$100 each for each of the denominations or \$300 face total. I should have done a better job of being there for her, but couldn't.

When her estate settled, I found myself in possession of enough, when added to my savings, to buy those firearms I wanted, maybe even a little more. I had wanted a Load-Ed or NM rifle, but got a good deal on a Super Match. The same day, I bought the Mossberg 590A1 he had on the shelf, a Taurus PT1911B and a repo of the Winchester model 62. I added a very clean, used Ruger Mark II handgun and I was basically set. I got damned good deals on a case of Speer 230gr Lawman and Gold Dot and bought a case of each. To round out my ammo, I bought a case of Brenneke slugs for the shotgun.

I got a promotion at work, to a foreman job, and my pay went up accordingly. Not bad for a 27-year-old man. Soon after, several things happened, more or less all at once. First, I had a chance to buy 10 acres of pasture land not far from town. Second, I found a clean used singlewide mobile home in the want ads. Third and lastly, my Christmas bonus this year was far larger than previous years. So, I bought the acreage on a 10-year land sale contract and took out a loan to buy the mobile home to put on the acreage.

The lucky part, for me, was that power lines and telephone lines ran by the acreage and getting power and phone installed didn't cost extra. However, I had to install septic and have a well drilled. I did the septic myself on 4 weekends and did two things probably outside the norm. I installed a larger tank and a larger than normal leaching field. Both were buried only as deep as circumstances required. The unlucky part that we get tornadoes in Texas and a mobile home is a tornado magnet.

I asked some of the guys at work what they thought about a storm shelter. I got answers ranging from building something small for occasional use to a fully-fledged bomb shelter. Opinions are like buttholes, everyone has one. One guy, Marty, said, "Ted if you decide you want to put in a large shelter, let me know; my father-in-law has a tractor with a backhoe and loader."

I'm Theodore 'Ted' Sampson, single, age 28 now, associates college degree. I work construction, primarily commercial. I've worked for the same company for 8 years and am a foreman. I started this diary to keep track of when I did my preps. I joined two different Preparedness websites but only lurk and learn.

"Marty, I don't know how I'd pay you for all the work."

"Easy, you pay for the gas for the tractor and give my family a place in the shelter when WW III happens."

"Yeah, right, WW III. Ok, you have a deal; I'll only be out the gas and the cost of the block and mortar."

Among the skills I'd picked up on the job was laying concrete block and of course finishing concrete. Marty could do both too and he offered to help, provided I built a large enough shelter to provide room for him and his family. On lunch breaks, we discussed what we'd need. I learned that he belonged to the same forums I did and asked the state of his preps.

"Cheryl and I have been double buying shelf stable foods for about four years. We also added 4 one year deluxe units from Walton Feed, one each year for the last 4 years. What do you have?"

"I just have the one year deluxe deal from Walton Feed."

"Do you have an armory?"

"I only have 5 weapons, but they're just what I wanted; the black rifle, tactical shotgun, 1911 and a couple of .22s. How about you?"

"A surplus M1911, a Browning High Power, a pair of Mini-14s, a Marlin model 39 lever action rifle and two standard model M1As."

“No shotgun?”

“I’m getting an Express combo for Christmas.”

“I was thinking about buying myself a Country Living Mill for next Christmas. I have all that grain and no way to grind it.”

“How big is your propane tank?”

“550 but they will only put 500 in it.”

“Is it full?”

“It’s nearly full, yes.”

“Standby power?”

“2kw portable generator for the refrigerator.”

“I’d talk to the boss and see if he’d give you a deal on leftover block on our construction jobs.”

“Don’t they return the leftover block?”

“Nah, it’s usually less than a pallet load. Over the course of a year, though, it adds up to enough to build that shelter.”

“Ok Marty, I will.”

“Mr. Harris, I wanted to ask about the leftover concrete block.”

“We have about 3 partial pallets at the moment, how much do you want?”

“All of it?”

“What for?”

“I need to build a storm shelter out on my acreage.”

“When did you buy an acreage? It sounds like I’m paying you too much.”

“The first of the year. I had to have a well drilled and put in my own septic. I set a used singlewide mobile home on the property.”

“How much block will you need?”

“Enough to build a 144’ wall 9’ high.”

“That a pretty big storm shelter.”

“Yes, well, I intend to use part of it for storage.”

“What are the dimensions?”

“Thirty-six feet square.”

“Then you’re going to need about (225x12.96) blocks?” (225 blocks per 100ft<sup>2</sup>)

“I figured close to 3,000, yes. I’ll need some to build support columns.”

“Do you have someone to help you?”

“Yes, Marty.”

“It’s COD. Buy all you need. Anything else?”

“Not at the moment, no.”

“I talked to the boss.”

“What did Ron say?”

“I didn’t talk to Ron, I talked to Mr. Harris.”

“How did you manage to get in to see him?”

“Walked in his door, why?”

“I meant you should talk to Ron, he’s the only further you needed to go.”

“You know that we’re looking at laying around 3,000 block, don’t you?”

“If we do it on weekends, we’ll have it done before the summer is over.”

“You really want to lay block during the middle of summer?”

“Not really, but if we wait until fall, we may not get it done in time.”

“In time for what?”

“Well, you can bet the Dems will take Congress in the 2006 elections. I wouldn’t be surprised if the country elected a Dem to replace Bush in 2008.”

“Any idea who?”

“Hillary seems to have the best chance at the moment. Anyway, back to the shelter, how big?”

“Thirty six feet square. That will give us almost 1,300 square feet or about 260ft<sup>2</sup> per person, including storage space. I intend to put the blast door on the side and bring another wall from the door to the corner and turn it. Radiation doesn’t turn corners.”

“Radiation huh? So this is definitely more than a storm shelter.”

“You’re the one that brought up WW III, not me.”

“Do you plan to go the whole way?”

“Like what?”

“Blast door, air filter and radiation equipment as a beginning. You should also consider communications equipment. Say, I’ve been meaning to ask, how did you get this property bought?”

“All the drill holes came up dry. The guy who sold it to me will still get the payments for the oil and gas lease for about 10 years. He sold it to me on a ten year land sale contract.”

“Did you get the water rights?”

“You bettcha.”

“How good is the well?”

“About 15 gallons per minute.”

“Do you have a water tank?”

“Not yet, but it is on the list; which seems to get longer every day.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“Well, I want a residential standby power system capable of generating a minimum of 100 amps. I’ve been looking at some of those Cummins Quiet Diesel generators. They’re compact and give you a lot of bang for the buck. They have a 12.5kw putting out 120/240 single phase and 104 amps. Average fuel consumption is 0.11gph at no load and 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ gph at full load.”

## Goals – Chapter 2

“What’s that cost?”

“Over 10 grand.”

“It’s a damned good thing you’re single.”

“I’ve been pricing out the stuff we’d need. The blast door is \$3,300, the air system is \$3,600 and the blast valves for the generator are \$400 each. We’d need two, intake and exhaust.”

“What about the radiation equipment?”

“I was thinking the package with an extra CD V-717 remote reading meter and an AMP 200 with a range from 1R to 10,000R.”

“What about a low range meter?”

“What do you suggest?”

“The CD V-700.”

“Haven’t added it up, but it won’t be cheap.”

“That’s why I said it’s good you’re single.”

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We dug the hole as deep as we could with the backhoe. It looked to be about 12’ deep. Next, we ran a soil pipe to connect to the septic tank and plugged it for the moment. We did the same thing with the well for water. Finally, we dug in the footings and mixed our own concrete spending most of the day mixing, pouring and finishing. I knew it would be a lot of concrete so I rented a larger mixer. There’s a lot to be said for having the right tools for the job.

We took time off for the concrete to cure and I hauled home all of the available leftover blocks. Ron explained that the company did it as sort of an employee benefit. They recovered the cost of the block and didn’t have to mess around returning them. Meanwhile, I was thinking that maybe I’d made a mistake by buying the Super Match instead of two loaded models. I could have had two rifles for very little more than the price of one. But, with the Nightforce scope on the Super Match, I had a sniper rifle and I was able to pick up the night vision you mount in front of the scope, giving you a day or night scope as required.

The Australian surplus wasn't half bad, but I wanted to see what my rifle would really do and got some Black Hills 175gr HP, Federal Match and some M118LR. It ran close to a buck a round. The results of the shoot-off were that the Black Hills came in first, the Federal Match and M118LR tying for a close second. I filed away a mental note to get more of the Black Hills when I could.

Ron said I could take mortar and #3 rebar at cost for my project and that saved me a bunch. Marty and I began the task of erecting the walls to the shelter and the wall for entrance. We finished the walls in 4 weekends and spent the fifth erecting the support columns. He said his old lady had been giving him hell for not spending time with his family and he had to take a while off. That worked for me because I had to finish saving up for the equipment from American Safe Rooms and the radiation equipment from KI4U and the Black Hills ammo and the generator. But wait, there's more. I needed a tank for diesel fuel for the generator and only God knows what else.

I erected the forms for the roof pour by borrowing plywood we used at work for the same purpose. I must have fiddled around for that with 4-5 weeks. Finally, Marty said his wife, Cheryl, had chilled out for a while and he was ready to help me pour the roof. We started that by putting rebar and wire mesh. He also had a suggestion, make our own blast doors.

"How would you do that?"

"I know a guy who has some of that 1" road plate. I was talking to him and one thing led to another and he mentioned he'd built his own blast door for his shelter out of the stuff. It's 3" thick and stepped like a bank vault door. He uses a hydraulic cylinder, two actual-ly, to raise and lower the door."

"Get a look at his shelter?"

"I said I knew him, not that we were close friends. All I got to see was the outside of the door."

"And?"

"It looked good to me."

"Do you have any of the radiation equipment?"

"I have a RadDetect PRD 1250 Personal Radiation Detector."

"Key chain deal?"

"Yeah."

"What about radios?"



“We have six FRS/GMRS radios.”

“The cheap ones?”

“No, the expensive ones with 5 watts for the GMRS channels. We haven’t gotten our license yet because they’re \$85.”

“While we’re on the subject of radios, Ron said the company is upgrading the radios in the trucks that we use on jobs.”

“To what?”

“Some newer model Motorola. I asked what they were going to do with the old equipment and he said he didn’t know.”

“What models is it?”

“The new equipment or the old?”

“The older stuff.”

“CM 300 and CP 200.”

“Do you think they would sell us some?”

“I’ll ask.”

“Get the prices, too.”

Well, my list was getting longer and I wasn’t so sure I wanted a ‘homemade’ blast door. If we ever needed it and it worked, fine; otherwise we could bend over and kiss our butts goodbye, provided we had time. No, anything worth doing was worth doing right, even if it meant more tuna and noodles, chili or macaroni and cheese. We got the roof poured and screed. We just finished up with the final trowel work around sunset. We’d let that concrete cure for a month and Marty could spend more time with Cheryl and the kids.

Meanwhile, I coated the outside with tar to seal it and put in gravel and drain lines around the base that I hooked into the soil pipe going to the septic tank. Next, I installed one of those combo sink/stove/oven/refrigerator combos plus the hot water heater and the toilet. By the time it came to push the soil back in, I even had the shower installed. Everything worked as intended.

“Been busy, huh?”

“A little here, a little there, you know.”

“Where do you intend to put the generator when you get it?”

“I sort of figured outside the shelter inside the access tunnel.”

“We’d better drill the holes for the intake and exhaust before we cover that spot with dirt. What about the intake and exhaust for the air filtrations system?”

“They go through the wall.”

“In that case, we’d better get them in, too. Are you putting a blast door or a blast hatch?”

“I haven’t made up my mind, but I’m leaning toward the door.”

“The local one or the one from American Safe Rooms?”

“Well...I’m not going to trust our lives on something homemade.”

We spent part of Saturday cutting the holes for the intakes and exhausts and putting in the 6” steel pipes. Later in the day, Marty began the backfill, compacting the soil as he went. We ended up finishing it on Sunday afternoon. The soil was mounded over the top giving us 7’ on top of the concrete or a protection factor over 100,000.

It was time to contact American Safe Rooms. I believe that at this point, I was saving about 75-80% of every paycheck so I’d have the money. I was using up some of the double bought groceries and about the only thing I was spending money on was diesel fuel. The first purchase was the complete Safe Cell air filtration system and a pair of blast valves for the generator I didn’t have. I was just a bit short on having the money to pay for the shipping on the blast door. One more paycheck and I’d be there.

Our construction firm did turnkey projects and employed electricians. Marty and I figured we could talk one of them into installing the ATS and wire for the generator when I got it. Most of his equity was sweat equity, but he did pay for the gas for the tractor. He admitted it was hard for a married man with two kids just making ends meet and it wasn’t getting any better. I was not very concerned to this point because although the home building had tapered off slightly, commercial building was going full bore.

We had to get help installing the blast door when it came. However, I relented and told Marty we’d go with the homemade blast hatch, giving him the dimensions of the hatch I wanted to put in. Once the blast door was in and the concrete added, we were finally able to seal up the shelter and use a battery to run the ventilation system in the non-filter mode. We’d come far pilgrim as the expression goes and we weren’t close to being done. We need a generator, fuel, fuel tank, spare parts, ATS, communications gear, radiation detection equipment, more Black Hills ammo and probably more food. I was al-

ready giving thought to a second rifle and maybe a handgun, just in case. The only good part was that my pickup was a Dodge with a Cummins 6BT engine.

As far as communication equipment, the company gave us two CM300s and four CP200s plus the software so we could reprogram them. I applied for the license at the same time as I applied for the GMRS license. I also shopped around for some good used SSB CB radios. The ones I wanted were as scarce as hen's teeth until I found an ad for Galaxy radios. I got one base station, two mobiles and antennas. The base station antenna was the copy of the Starduster and the vehicle antennas were Wilson 5000 with the 62" whip and magnetic mount.

I figured I better finish the radio project before I started anything else and after reviewing the 3 major brands, Yaesu, Icom and Kenwood, decided on the Kenwood TS-2000. I read a story on one of the websites where the author swore by a 10 band MFJ-1798 mounted on a 40' mast made from pipe and got them. I also got my Technicians license. Finally, I got the Country Living Grain Mill for my Christmas present to myself.

I knew in my heart that a lot would depend on a reliable source of power and after Christmas began saving. My Christmas bonus was a little less than the previous year, but substantial and it started the ball rolling. By spring, I had the money set aside for the 12.5kw Quiet Diesel. I bought it just after Independence Day and Marty and I got it set up and ready to go. One of the electricians from work, Jake, wired up the ATS and I bought a case of oil filters and a drum of motor oil. We hooked up a 55-gallon drum of diesel fuel temporarily and the generator worked just fine. The generator was in the end of the tunnel just past the blast door into the shelter. Jake also wired the inside of the shelter using conduit for the wires including the 240 outlet the stove required.

Never mind we're sitting on millions of barrels of crude in the Permian Basin and never mind that Midland and Odessa are the centers for oil production in the area; that didn't get me a fuel tank or diesel. Marty came through this time; the guy who made the hatch had a used tank from a filling station that had been tested against leakage. He got it when a station had to replace their tanks because some were leaking. He'd checked and this tank didn't leak. He wanted what he had in it plus \$1,000. What he had in it was the price of scrap steel, some MIG wire and a little electricity. That was strange, because tank was fiberglass.

Marty and I talked it over and decided that having a 15,000-gallon tank was ideal. We agreed to the price if he delivered the tank. We were told to have a crane ready two weekends hence. Marty brought back the tractor and dug the hole for the tank on the weekend in between and I got permission to use one of our cranes from work. Marty and I got the fuel line installed and the fuel line trench backfilled before the tank was delivered. Now, I/we just needed to fill the tank and diesel was getting expensive.

### Goals – Chapter 3

I'd always fancied myself as having enough cash lying around for an emergency. However, considering all the things I'd been forced to spend money on over the last three or so years, I sure didn't have much. Plus, I was still on a diet of macaroni and cheese, spam, spaghetti, tuna and noodles, and chili. The price of diesel had climbed out of sight so the tank remained unfilled and the generator connected to the 55-gallon drum.

The year 2008 wasn't the best of times construction wise. The price of fuel peaked and then fell as the price of a barrel of oil fell to below \$50. I had been saving every penny I could and had quite a bit set aside for fuel. My only large expenditure had been just before the election, during September, when I stocked up on the Black Hills ammo. Thank God, I got a deal on it!

Everyone knows what happened next. Osama Obama got elected and the run on guns and ammo began. I called that one right and perked up my ears when it was suggested that sometime during his first year in office, someone would do something to the US. I started filling the diesel tank and ordered all of the radiation equipment. One thing I hadn't considered that Marty had was a gas mask and Tyvek suit. I got the same stuff he got from the same place, Approved Gas Masks. I spent close to \$1,500 with Radmeters4U and more at Arrow Tech for the AMP 200.

Then every paycheck went into diesel fuel. I re-sighted my rifle to the Black hills ammo. The iron sights were set for the surplus and the quick detach scope for the Black Hills. A lot of people were unhappy about us electing our first black president. Would they have been as unhappy had his name been Colin Powell? When Hillary looked like she might win, people were concerned about the first female president but nobody minded that much when McCain picked Palin although it may have cost him the election.

I picked up a new 24.9ft<sup>3</sup> Kenmore chest freezer and placed it in the shelter. I began to stock it with beef, chicken, ham and bacon. Marty used lumber he picked up somewhere to frame in walls and created an enclosed bath and two bedrooms. My entire 2008 Christmas bonus went into the diesel tank along with my November and December paychecks. We disconnected the drum of fuel, but kept it right where it was. I ordered 6 gallons of PRI-D from Battery Stuff but knew I'd need more. During early January 2009, I ordered 6 more gallons of PRI-D and 6 of PRI-G.

Here I am in my early 30s and single. It sometimes gets lonely at night, let me tell you. Being single had made the preps possible but I wanted a son to pass on the family name. What I'm leading up to is how I met Mary. I was going through the checkout lane at Sam's Club and she rang up my order. I looked and saw no wedding ring, just a black eye.

"Run into a door? That must have hurt."

“No, the guy I’ve been dating turned out to have a temper and took it out on me when they repossessed his car.”

“No man should treat a woman like that.”

“I can’t say that I disagree with you. I’ve seen you before, coming through my lane.”

“I don’t shop often and prefer it to be a pleasant experience. You’re the prettiest check-out clerk so I try to get in your lane.”

“Even with the shiner?”

“Especially with the shiner.”

“I’m Mary.”

“I figured; it’s on your name tag, I’m Ted Sampson.”

“Stocking up?”

“Yes, I got a new freezer.”

“You’d be smarter to get a side of beef and buy your pork and chicken products from us.”

“Thanks, I might do that.”

“Your total is \$743.29.”

“Ouch!” I counted out 8 Ben Franklins and she made change.

“Do you need help? You have four carts.”

“Just to get it to the pickup, thanks.”

“You’re welcome.”

I stand about 5’11 and weigh in around 150. She probably went about 5’6 and was slender. I put her age close to mine. She appeared to have a nice figure but nothing outlandish. Her brunette hair was in a pony tail that reached to her shoulders. Mary was an old fashioned name.

I’d gotten my CHL shortly after I got the PT1911. I had always wanted a SAA Colt, but they’re expensive. I was range qualified for the pistol, not a revolver. I generally carried the pistol locked up in my pickup when I went out.

About now, as everyone knows, the economy was in the toilet. Not just in the US, but everywhere. Obama had a plan to put 2.5 million unemployed people to work. It sounded a lot like FDR's New Deal. I'd finished filling the diesel tank and Marty and I installed a used pump so I could fuel my pickup. I could record the gallons used so I knew how much to order when it needed topped off.

Taking Mary's advice I got the side of beef and went back to Sam's Club to get the pork and poultry. Pullman Ham is fully-cooked, ready to eat, processed, boneless pieces of ham pressed together.

It's called "Pullman" because it's a canned ham that is packed in long tins called "Pullman cans" because they are shaped like railway cars in a long rectangle. The weight of the ham will be between 4 to 16 pounds (1¾ to 7¼ kg.) The size will be either 4 inches tall by 4 inches wide (10 by 10 cm), or 4 inches wide by 10 inches tall (10 by 25 cm). The length can vary from 8 inches to 20 inches (20 to 50 cm.)

The US Army and US Air Force specify that they want theirs in 4 by 6 inch (10 to 15 cm) rectangles, weighing between 10 and 15 pounds (4 1/2 to 7 kg.) Instead of being shipped in tins, it may be sealed in tough plastic packaging.

It is used for slicing for sandwiches, or for dicing for cooking. It is very easy to slice for sandwiches, especially for institutions to machine slice. A good deal of it is made abroad in countries such as Denmark.

I got a Pullman ham at a deli and man, was it expensive. It gave me an excuse to acquire a meat slicer. In turn, this led to my reviewing what I actually had on hand for cooking and baking. The answer was, not much. I got on the net and started searching. I found loaf pans to bake those 24oz loaves of bread, a pressure cooker/canner, a meat tenderizer and so forth. I spent a couple of months loading up on cooking supplies. When canning season rolled around, I bought all of the quart and pint jars I could afford plus an extra two years' worth of lids.

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On the world scene, besides the economy, Iran seemed to be pushing Israel into attacking them so the Arab nations could gang up on Israel. There seemed to be a lot of concern about China, but nothing specific a person could spell out. On the local scene, I screwed up my courage and asked Mary out. I'll be damned if she didn't say yes!

"I think I'm going to have the steak and lobster, I don't eat out much and it will be a real treat."

"I'm afraid I can't eat that much Ted, I'm going to get the petite filet."

When the cocktail waiter came, she ordered a whiskey sour and I did the same. I usually just have an occasional beer. After we placed our orders, I did my best to try to get to know her.

“My general background is that I work for Harris Construction as a foreman. I’ve never been in the military and never been married. I don’t have any kids that I know of. I have 10 acres outside of town about half paid for and a singlewide mobile home fully paid for. I only have one vehicle, the pickup I picked you up in.”

“I’ve worked for Sam’s for 3 years, Ted. My last name is Miller and I’ve never been married either. I have a Bachelor’s degree from Midland College in Organizational Management, a poor choice in this economy. Mind if I ask a question?”

“Not at all.”

“Where do you store all the food you’ve been buying? What do you do, use a spare bedroom as a pantry?”

“No, I have a separate storage area in my storm shelter.”

“Storm shelter! You’d be better off with a bomb shelter.”

“Why would you say that?”

“Don’t you read the news? There’s the situation with China, the one in the Middle East and we still have troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“As a matter of fact, I do follow the news. You’re right, these days a person does need a bomb shelter. There seems to be some talk of someone doing something against the US inside our borders during Obama’s first year in office. What do you think of him?”

“Obama? I voted for the other guy.”

“Yes, McCain took Texas 55% to Obama’s 44%. What hobbies do you have Mary?”

“I do a little sewing, water ski in the summer and snow ski in the winter when I can. I enjoy camping out.”

“Are you into the shooting sports?”

“No, I’m not. Well...let me change that. I purchase a Sig model P220 Carry after that incident with David. You know the gun?”

“No, I don’t.”

"It's .45ACP, double action/single action with night sights and I have 3 ten round magazines. Before I owned it, I never shot a firearm so I got instruction."

"I have a Taurus PT1911. Have you ever fired a rifle?"

"I shot a .22 a long time ago. I've never had the chance to shoot a big rifle."

"I'd say that my primary hobby is probably the shooting sports, but I don't shoot competition. I have the black rifle, a tactical shotgun, a Taurus, a .22 pump and the .45."

"What kind of rifle?"

"The civilian version of the M14."

"Fulton, Smith or Springfield?"

"Springfield Super Match."

"Expensive?"

"MSRP around \$2,800. Our food is here."

She really sucked air when I told her the price of the rifle. My justification, if I needed one, was that a man should have good tools and as main battle rifles went, the Super Match was outstanding, although overpriced. Maintaining ½ MOA accuracy required a lot of practice and very good, expensive ammo.

Clearly she wasn't opposed to firearms ownership; not if she carried a big Sig. She'd let her hair down and it fairly shined. But then so did her hazel eyes and she had a pert smile all evening. I hadn't noticed the Galco purse at first, but it was now obvious; she was packing heat. The good news was that if this led to something, I wouldn't need to buy her a handgun, only a rifle. In between bites of steak and lobster, I vowed to get a M1A Loaded model from Springfield, for a backup rifle.

After dinner, we took in a movie and then went for coffee. She said what a wonderful time she'd had and I took the opportunity to ask if she'd like to do it again. Her reply was yes, but maybe pizza next time. Even that, she said, was getting expensive these days. We more or less began to date on a regular basis after that.

With the frightful economy, everyone was having sales and I got the rifle on sale as well as a new bedroom suite. Most of my furniture was rickety and old. When it got close to Christmas 2009, I purchased the solitaire. We'd become very close; not physically intimate, but very close. She said yes! We set the date as Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010. By the way, she was as good as, if not better than, a shot with my Super Match as I was. In addition to the diamond, I gave her the rifle, 25 T-57 magazines and a case of ammo for Christmas. Cute, huh?



## Goals – Chapter 4

You may want to know if she was knock-down gorgeous like a movie star. She was to me and nobody else mattered. She was better looking than some and not quite as good looking as others. Wash the paint off their faces and Mary would hold her own.

Mary's car was a beater, a 1967 Camaro with an in-line 6 engine and would hold its own as a survivalist's car. She told me that it had belonged to her father. The Camaro was brought out in September, 1966 for the 1967 model year to compete with the Mustang. It had about 300,000 miles on the odometer.

We had a small wedding because I was the sole surviving member of my family, as she was. Marty stood up with me and a friend of Mary's, Trish, was her Matron of Honor. According to Wiki, the number in the wedding party is supposed to represent status and the wealthy typically have several bridesmaids and groomsmen. Our wedding represented our standing, dirt poor. All of my money was in a hole in the ground. Marty and Cheryl went out for dinner with us after but Trish begged off. The following day was Valentines and I went with candy because I bought her roses yesterday.

"I need to make up a bug out bag for your car."

"I already have one, I think. It's a large fanny pack with the things I'd need if I was afoot due to a car breakdown, right?"

"Right, you already have a BOB. Well...our next preparedness item has to be the first aid kit."

"How much gas do you have stored?"

"Gas or diesel? There're 15,000-gallons of diesel and about 10 gallons of gas."

"My Camaro runs on gas, we'd better get a farm tank, say 500-gallons. Where did you get the furniture for the shelter, Goodwill?"

"No, the stuff in our bedroom and the common area is my old furniture."

"Poor baby; that explains why everything seems new."

"Can you order the farm tank on Monday and I'll see about the first aid kit?"

"Sure, do you want it filled?"

"Yes, the price of gas will just go up if I say no."

In case you're wondering, we took Friday off, moved her things and closed out her apartment. It was furnished and the furniture she had was older than the stuff I moved

to the shelter. She let them keep the cleanup deposit, her choice, not mine. I'll also have you know that she stayed in a motel Friday night because it just wouldn't look right.

"Tell them we'll leave a quart of PRI-G for them to add to the tank before they fill it."

"What's PRI-G?"

"Gasoline stabilizer. The diesel fuel has PRI-D in it. The ratio is one gallon of PRI product per 2,000-gallons of fuel."

"If you have a diesel pickup, why do you have 10-gallons of gas?"

"Oh, I, uh, we have a 2kw portable generator. I got that when I bought the mobile home."

"Did you buy it new?"

"Did I buy what new, the generator? Yes."

"No, the mobile home."

"I bought that used, it was repossessed."

"That's how we met, remember?"

"Oh yeah, the shiner your boyfriend gave you when his car was repossessed."

"I think now that it may have been worth it."

"It's a shame that your makeup didn't hide it."

"Yeah, lucky you."

In addition to the gas tank and first aid kit, we needed to order more food from Walton to get us back to a one year supply. The price had gone up, but they had the same assortment. I also wanted to double buy groceries so we had food for two rather than one. I tended to buy the smaller cans of things to reduce leftovers. We could use up what I had and double buy the larger cans.

Although I kept some food in the kitchen pantry, I had been buying by the case, when I could, and storing it in the shelter. Some things didn't come in small cans, like Campbell's soup. I had regular cans of tomato, mushroom and chicken noodle. My spaghetti sauce was canned, etc. About the only meals I'd made in the past that generated leftovers was tuna noodle casserole and chili. I was in for a real surprise, she could really cook. Since she worked there and knew what was on special I let Mary do the grocery shopping.

Osama Obama had been in office for over a year and we hadn't had any attacks against the US, inside the US. He was doing a steady troop drawdown consistent with his plan to have us out of Iraq in 16 months. The military didn't like it and they were vocal. Some of the troops were shifted to Afghanistan and we were having the same problems the Russians did. Some NATO members had drawn down their troops until they were all home.

His *2.5 million jobs by 2011* project was in trouble because of resistance in Congress and an absence of volunteers. Nobody seemed to know how the government would pay for it. He claimed by reducing the war costs but with the economy even further in the toilet, tax revenues really shrank. The net national debt was over ten trillion and rising so he couldn't claim he was doing any better than Bush. Speaking of Bush, he'd all but fallen off the radar. It also didn't appear that there would be a Sarah 2012 campaign. And, Ted Stevens died ending his problems with the law.

We had an occasion to go to Dallas and we joined Costco. They had some store brands only available from their stores and we stocked up on those. They were mostly Kirkland products, like canned chicken and canned beef. Their price on coffee was cheaper than Sam's so we bought a few trays of that too. It's a shame they didn't have a store in Midland. It was about 330 miles to Dallas, 320 miles to Austin and 475 miles to Houston. I mostly shopped there when business took me there. Mary suggested we get a rototiller and put in a garden.

"Why would we do that with us both working?"

"I won't be work much longer."

"You're pregnant?"

"Yes and I'm due in about 7 months. I saw the All American Canner and the quarts and pints and I'd really like to stay home once the baby comes."

"Hot damn, when did you find out?"

"I came up late and used a home test but didn't trust the results. So, I waited a second month and when it didn't come again, saw the doctor."

"When did that happen?"

"I think maybe the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> of February."

"So you're due in November?"

"I think so. We'll need to add a few things like a crib, high chair, baby clothes and a changing table. I think I'll use cloth diapers if it's ok with you."

“You’ll need bottles and such, just in case.”

“And a blender or something to make our own baby food, again just in case.”

“I suppose we’d better plan on stocking up at Sam’s before you quit.”

“That’s a good idea. When will you be going to a Costco again?”

“No time soon unless you’d like to just go there and shop. We can do it, we have a good amount of savings and the land contract will be paid off early. All of the fuel tanks are topped off and I can’t think of anything else we need to spend money on other than baby things.”

“The Camaro needs new brakes and a tune up but that shouldn’t be too expensive.”

“Could you drop it off on the way to work and pick it up when you get off?”

“I already made the appointment. What would you like for your birthday?”

“If you can find a good used Ruger original Vaquero in .45 Colt or a good used Marlin Cowboy in .45 Colt, it would be nice.”

“Are you into single action shooting?”

“Not really, I always wanted some cowboy guns.”

“Ok, I’ll look around and see what I can find.”

“As long as we’re talking about birthdays, what would you like?”

“A good sewing machine; maybe you can talk to Cheryl about it and get her to help you pick one out.”

“Any brand preference?”

“Either Brothers or White, I don’t need anything fancy, just a good all-around sewing machine.”

“I guess it’s too far ahead to mention Christmas?”

“Don’t worry, I’ll think of something.”

“If you want to plant a garden next year, I’ll need that rototiller and an assortment of seeds. I read on Frugal’s the one good source of heirloom seeds is the Ark Institute. I’m sure if I do a search for heirloom seeds, I can find all kinds of sources.”

“When you do, let’s discuss it before you order, there’s no sense in getting seed for things we won’t eat.”

“I will, honey. Canning season is coming up so we can stock up on more jars and lids. A person probably can’t have too many canning supplies.”

“Where did you get your pressure canner?”

“Canning Pantry in Hyrum, Utah. They have all kinds of things. Check the favorites menu on my computer for the listing. They have lids by the case and we might get some from them.”

“How many bundles do you have in the shelter of bathroom tissue?”

“Maybe 30 of the 30 roll bundles of large rolls of Charmin.”

“Feminine hygiene?”

“Zip.”

“Ok, I’ll stock up for later. I generally use tampons, but I think I’m going to need pads for after the baby is born.”

“I don’t really know anything about it.”

“Would you buy them for me if I needed some and couldn’t get to the store?”

“Why wouldn’t I? I’m not some kid who doesn’t know about the birds and bees.”

“Most men seem to be too embarrassed.”

“How is it different from buying bathroom tissue? Just make sure you give me the particulars so I don’t have to ask a clerk for help.”

“One other thing. I noticed you have a Country Living Mill.”

“So?”

“Do you have spare parts in case it breaks?”

## Goals – Chapter 5

“I can get them. I know they have several accessories and a different auger. I believe they also make a spare parts kit, I can check Frugal’s store or Canning Pantry.”

“Did you see that news article about Israel?”

“Which one?”

“What’s his face in Iran seems to be going out of his way to bait them into attacking.”

“There’s nothing new about that, it has been going on for about 4-5 years. We refused to sell them F-22 Raptors, but sold them two squadrons of the F-35A Lightning II. That was a big sale including the spare parts and so forth. It’s a 5<sup>th</sup> generation fighter so they now have stealth capabilities.”

I had learned in the few months we’d been married that our conversations usually cover a dozen topics making it difficult to remember everything we discussed. I now used a steno pad to take note about things I was committed to do. How she managed to get it all straight in her head was beyond me. However, it seemed almost like she had total recall; especially about the commitments I made.

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“How much do we have in savings?”

“About \$3,500 give or take, why?”

“Actually, I was just curious. If you can remember, try to keep me up to date. How much gold and silver do we have?”

“\$100 each of pre-65 halves, quarters and dimes.”

“No gold?”

“It’s a case of hindsight being 20/20. Sorry.”

“Don’t worry about it, I have some.”

“Some what?”

“American Eagles. Daddy bought them and I got them and held onto them.”

“A lot?”

“What’s a lot?”

“I don’t know, how many do you have?”

“I have twelve troy ounces each of one ounce Eagles, half ounce Eagles, quarter ounce Eagles and tenth ounce Eagles. That only four troy pounds but it seems like a lot.”

“Mary that’s a fortune. Last I looked, gold was \$800 an ounce and you have 48 ounces. That’s about \$38,000. Where are they stored?”

“I put the lock box in the gun safe in the shelter. The key to the box is on the top shelf at the rear.”

“You’re just full of surprises. You didn’t turn them in when they recalled gold?”

“Not just no, but HELL no, pardon my French. The government is just trying to pick our pockets.”

“So, except for a little fill in we’re pretty well set.”

“I don’t think I could have found a better life partner.”

“I didn’t do so bad myself.”

o

Over the course of the next few months we acquired the things we discussed. I’d have preferred more canning jars. Mary managed to get 20 cases of quarts and 10 cases of pints to add to those I bought earlier. Our new total was 30 dozen quarts and 20 dozen pints plus 5 cases of jelly jars. Because of the shelter, we were able to replace the 550 with a 1,100-gallon propane tank.

My birthday present was the Marlin rifle and 100 rounds of Buffalo Bore 260gr Colt ammo. I loaded up the rifle on the next Saturday and tried the ammo. That stuff kicks like you won’t believe. I immediately ordered 3 200-round cases of Winchester Silvertip. I began looking forward to the Vaquero I figured Mary would buy me for Christmas. Cheryl helped and we picked Brothers. Don’t ask about the machine, all I did was pay for it.

I found a rototiller, new unfortunately, and tilled a garden plot. Mary wanted to get strawberries started. Tell me, is late fall the right time to start strawberries? I guess I know what kind of jelly or preserves she’ll be making. And, of course, she started to show fairly early and worked until October. She didn’t have any complications that I knew of and although she knew the sex of the baby from the ultrasound, she wouldn’t tell me.

After the baby shower, we went shopping and got everything we needed that she hadn’t received. With Marty’s help, I moved my compact, stacked washer dryer combo to the

shelter and we put in new, mid-grade Sears washer and dryer. Our savings had reached a new high of just over \$6,000 thanks to having two jobs. The boss, Ron, confided in me that I was being considered for a position as job superintendent. I had to do an interview with Mr. Harris. Ron said it was to fill an upcoming vacancy, not him he assured me, and wished me luck.

Mr. Harris seemed to be more interested in my storm shelter than my skills. He did ask that should I be promoted who I'd recommend to take my place. I told him Marty had the construction and people skills and would make an excellent foreman. (What are friends for? He did too!) Then he announced that should I be selected, my first construction project to superintend would be putting in a shelter for him and his family. I'd been wondering why I hadn't seen block piling up. I asked myself, "Would the man promote me just to pick my brain?"

The answer to my question was yes. I got the promotion as did Marty. That's when I realized that Marty was my partner on my shelter project and his brain was probably going to be picked too. It turned out the shelter was a turnkey project with a substantial budget. When it was done, it was to be fully stocked with food and equipment plus an armory purchased in the name of the corporation. Mr. Harris said that if he was satisfied, there would be a bonus in the deal. I was thinking a cash bonus but turned out to be flat out wrong.

I wasn't involved in the purchase of the firearms, but I could have made several suggestions. The armory was stocked with 6 M1A Super Match rifles with scopes (sniper weapon), 36 each H&K 416 and 417 (military versions), 6 each MR556 and MR762 (civilian versions), 36 Mossberg 590A1 with the Speed stocks and 40, count them 40, Kimber II Tactical pistols. The pistol ammo was Speer Lawman and Gold Dot, the rifle ammo was all Black Hills including the .308 & .223 NATO. The shotgun ammo included 00 buck, #4 buck, slugs and breeching rounds. Have you ever priced those? \$4 a pop. He also had three of the Barrett M82A1Ms that I'd have gladly stolen. His ammo was a mixture of Barrett and Winchester Mk211MP. I have no idea where he got that ammo, it's totally illegal.

The communications equipment was all Yaesu and he had both beam and vertical antennas installed. His generator was a pair of Koehler 100kw, wired in parallel and he put in four 40,000-gallon diesel tanks made by Containment Solutions in Conroe, TX. His shelter sat on a virgin piece of land just outside the city limits. We also put in an above the ground, earth sheltered 4 stall garage for his vehicles. The shelter would sleep about 50 and had a 5 year supply of food for 50 people. (It must be nice!)

The radiation equipment all came from Arrow Tech except for the RadDetect PRD 1250 Personal Radiation Detectors. Mr. Harris seemed to have a spring in his step when the project was finished and was all smiles.

During this time, I had to take off time for Robert William to be born. He was small, 6 pounds, 10 ounces, 19" long. He looked just like, uh, a baby; Robert after Mary's father



and William after mine. On-the-other-hand, he had to be the most handsome baby ever born.

“I had something in mind for you, Ted, if I was satisfied with project. I’m way beyond satisfied, thank you. Marty, the same goes for you, but I wasn’t sure what to get you so please accept this check in my appreciation. Ted, do you see that Pelican case over there? Your bonus is inside.”

“Son-of-a gun, a Barrett! Thank you Mr. Harris, thank you 10,000 times. I’ll order some ammo.”

“No need for that Ted, I have 40 cases of Hornady 750gr A-MAX and 40 cans of Winchester Mk211MP for you. I can’t tell you how much this means to me and my family. I understand you’re now the proud father of a healthy baby boy.”

“Yes sir, our first. My wife Mary is a real winner. So is Marty’s wife Cheryl. You know that Marty and I are together on my shelter project.”

“We have another construction project for you two. I have a friend who doesn’t like the look of the world situation and he wants a shelter. He has a budget, so do the best you can with the money he has to spend. You can talk to him and find out what he wants included.”

o

And, so it went for the next several months, Marty and I were running two Crews constructing bomb shelters. Each job resulted in a small cash bonus for each of us because we always managed to bring in the projects under budget and better equipped than the buyer wanted. One of the bonuses we received was in one ounce American Eagle gold coins, 8 for me and 4 for Marty. That was on the second largest project we did, just a bit shy of what Mr. Harris built.

“Did he give you a wheel set for the cannon?”

I’m afraid not, just the bipod and monopod. Nice scope, though, the BORS with a Leupold Mark IV 8.5-25x50mm ER/T M1. He even included a box of CR-123 Lithium batteries.”

“How many magazines did he include?”

“Nine extra; altogether, not counting the Winchester ammo, the package cost him around seventeen grand.”

“What’s so special about the Winchester ammo?”

“It costs about \$7.50 per round and is HEIAP, hence as illegal as you can get.”

“Anti-material round?”

“So you do know the talk as well as walk the walk.”

“I try. What do you intend to do with all the money we have saved up?”

“I’m going to buy two Surefire FA762S, suppressors for our rifles and 4 FA556A for our children’s rifles. Those H&K MR223s are really something so I’m going through the company and buy 4 of those.”

“What about ammo?”

“Since the ban, they can’t give it away. I think we should buy 20,000-rounds of FMJ.”

“How is the company able to buy this stuff?”

“Mr. Harris had the company apply for a class three FFL. He also started a separate Security Consulting Corporation. The funny thing is, their only customers are his friends. I think that company may be losing money.”

“Do they have offices and a staff?”

“One office, run by a secretary and a former SAS operative; they have a staff made up of Special Forces types, like Blackwater Tactical. I wouldn’t want to meet up with one of them in a dark alley if he was mad at me.”

“What kind of Special Forces?”

“SAS, British Royal Marines, US Army Special Forces, SEALs and FORECON.”

“What’s FORECON?”

“Marine Force Recon.”

“At least they all speak English.”

“They do, but they all speak Spanish and French plus at least one other language, or more.”

“Are they armed?”

“Yes, with just about any kind of weapons they want. These guys are dead serious.”

“How many of them are there?”

## Goals – Chapter 6

“Counting the head guy, 36 men; and, they’re all male and single.”

“Mr. Harris’s self-defense force?”

“I hadn’t thought about it, but it could just be. His shelter is large enough for his family and all of those guys plus a few more people. Strange thing was that his communications gear included some strictly military stuff, SINCGARS.”

“How do you know?”

“I asked.”

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We were coming up on the holiday season of 2011. I had a chance to buy some pre-65 silver and did so although it wasn’t quite legal. I had been right about the Vaquero, except for the timing. I got it for my birthday this year. It was almost new 7½” and came with a Kirkpatrick gun belt, the Laredoan. Mary also bought me more of the Buffalo Bore +P 260gr ammo. She didn’t tell me that she also bought the cross draw holster and another Vaquero with a 4⅝” barrel. Where’s the scabbard?

While Marty and I were busy building bomb shelters, Cheryl and Mary were busy cultivating, harvesting and canning. I believe they bought up every new Mason jar in a 100 mile radius. They may have even gone to Lubbock and Odessa. She also ordered 4 cases of lids from Canning Pantry.

Despite the spending spree, we had increased our savings; due in no small part to my increased salary and bonuses. Marty said that Cheryl and he were in the best shape financially that they ever had been, despite the poor economy. The cash bonuses would make it on the tax return. I was going to cheat on the gold and the rifle because they were both illegal and there was no record of them. Dumb luck is better than no luck at all. And, we had virtually all of our money in cash.

Mary and I purchased 4 one year deluxe supplies from Walton and Marty and Cheryl did the same thing. That gave us a 2 year supply for three. About the same time, in November, she announced she was expecting again. My first thought was Walton and I called and increased our order to six. That made our total order ten units and we only had a single drop off charge because it was going directly into the shelter.

Our order arrived and we got it into the shelter. I had just topped off the fuel tanks, too. That’s when it happened. India and Pakistan were at each other’s throats over that Bombay (Mumbai) attack. Accusations were traded on a daily basis, but neither country launched on the other. We had installed the radar and missiles in Eastern Europe and

Russia had installed Islander missiles in response. It was a standoff reminiscent of the Cold War. As near as I can tell, here's how it went down.

Out of the blue, Iran launched on Israel and it came as a surprise to everyone. What's his name had toned down his rhetoric and the whole world thought that crisis was over. Be careful of the snake that doesn't rattle... Our troops were all home from Iraq and Afghanistan and I believe that was why he waited. It would mean, hopefully, one less enemy to fight.

Israel responded in kind. Russia attacked Israel, upholding a long standing agreement. China then turned its missiles towards Russia and India and Pakistan launched everything they had. To this point, we had stayed out. However, the Russian attack on Israel resulted in our launching on Russia and China using up our MM IIIs, all 450 of them. Russian submarines retaliated against the US. We held our submarines in reserve. Strangely, ALL of our naval assets were at sea, an unheard of occurrence. Did somebody know something? Was it important?

o

For what it's worth, we were home when it happened and Marty and Cheryl were there for dinner. When the weather alert radio went off, we assumed it was a tornado, but had no idea what it might be. It didn't take long to learn that we were in a world of hurts. It was orderly though; we gathered up our things and got to the shelter well ahead of the attack. Marty sealed it up and I turned on the air purifier. Next, I made sure all the antennas were grounded and we turned on the TV.

Some panicked looking correspondent was repeating Obama's message to take shelter. Shortly thereafter, the TV went off the air and I disconnected the cable. Just in time as it later turned out. Next the lights went out and we could faintly hear the generator cranking before the lights came back on. In passing, I suppose that I should comment they we used the lower power florescent bulbs that are used to replace incandescent lamps. They were supposed to replace 60 watt bulbs, but didn't give off more light than a 40 watt bulb.

Our greatest power demand would be the refrigerator, stove and freezer. Even better, our recommended oil service interval was: check daily, change every 250 hours. Marty and I had Jake install the remote instruments so we could keep an eye on the generator from inside the shelter. Jake had called us dumb. That just screamed for a *Forest Gump* type response, but I couldn't think of one and the internet was now down. Somehow, I doubted it would be back up soon; but I did think of Jake for all of 10 seconds.

My momma always said, "Life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get."

"Huh? Oh, *Forrest Gump*?"

“It sure seems to be appropriate.”

“It is that. Well, this is why we prepared isn’t it? Who would have thought?”

“I did.”

“That’s a fact Jack.”

“*Stripes?*”

“Yeah. I’ll take first watch and wake you up around, what, two?”

“Works for me.”

Marty sat down at the table and got the notebook to record the radiation levels. After we had them, we’d have to compute the peak level at the blast site and put it in the spreadsheet. It wasn’t as hard as it sounded because we had the local readings and elapsed time. The weather instruments would give us a good idea of the origin of the blast. Plus, we had the AMP 200 to back up the CD V-717. I downloaded the spreadsheet from Frugal’s.

The rest of us went to bed. The mood was sullen, with an unearthly quiet.

“What’s going to happen?”

“We’re going to survive, Mary. I don’t really see how we could be better prepared. Surely we’ll find medical resources for when the baby comes.”

“It’s a girl, this time. She’s due in July.”

Well I guess Mary didn’t tell me right away after all, not that it mattered. The largest city to the west of Midland that was likely to be a target was Tucson, Arizona. I’d looked it up and Tucson was 516 miles (830 km) (448 nautical miles) west of Midland. The initial heading from Tucson to Midland was east ( $89.0^\circ$ ) and the initial heading from Midland to Tucson was west ( $273.6^\circ$ ). And no, they don’t add up to  $360^\circ$ . We’ll call it  $90^\circ$  and  $270^\circ$  for simplicity.

So, unless something I didn’t expect was targeted, it might take 50 plus hours for the wind to blow in the radiation. And in 50 plus hours, the level would only be 0.01 of the level at the blast location. When I got up at 1:45, we hadn’t received any radiation. When Marty got up at 5:45 to relieve me, that situation prevailed. We discussed it and decided that we had time to do a few things outside before the radiation arrived. We charged a pair of CD V-742s and put the battery in the CD V-715. We unbuttoned the shelter blast door, closing it behind us and opened the blast hatch.

We couldn't see any mushrooms sprouting, but it had been over 8 hours and they would have been well east. First, we went to their house and picked up the things that weren't already in the shelter. There were disabled vehicles everywhere, probably HEMP. There was an advantage to having vehicles older than Moses. Even Marty's car ran. But, it was older than dirt too. He drove his pickup back from his place and we parked both vehicles and covered them with a tarp from the shed. I went into the trailer and picked up a few more clothes including all of Bobby's clothes. Both Mary and I were wearing jeans, but I grabbed her maternity wear, just in case.

"You know, I'll bet all those people that we built bomb shelters for are cursing right about now."

"Why would they be unhappy? They have excellent protection."

"Too true. However, my best guess is that we won't receive any radiation until Tucson blows in."

I proved to be wrong. We got radiation around 22 hours after we estimated the blasts had occurred and it was higher than I would have thought.

"What is west of us around 220 miles?"

"Let's look in the road atlas. Hmm, how about Alamogordo, New Mexico?"

"What is in Alamogordo?"

"It's what's outside of Alamogordo, Holloman Air Force Base. Rumor had it a few years back that there was a Presidential Bunker located at Holloman."

"How far is it?"

"It's 233 miles (375 km) (202 nautical miles) on an initial heading from Alamogordo to Midland of east-southeast ( $103.7^\circ$ ) or an initial heading from Midland to Alamogordo of west-northwest ( $285.7^\circ$ ). We'll have to assume it was Holloman and work backwards to compute the peak level to plug into the spreadsheet."

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Here's how to do that. Bring up the spreadsheet and enter 100. Go down the hour's column until you find the elapsed hours since the attack. Move to the right to Residual Radiation column and use that number to divide into your peak level. That will give you the peak level where and when the weapon went off. You should then seek your peak level in the Millirads/hour column for the elapsed time.

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“Whatever, it’s still climbing.”

“I see that, maybe it’s a good thing we went out when we did.”

The fallout peaked and an hour later, we were computing the peak at detonation, 3,000R. Given the time and the distance, that tied in with our peak level of 600R. Did that mean we could go out in 68 days or would we have to wait 9 months? It didn’t matter, except for Mary being pregnant; we could stay for a year if we had to. That’s why we had the radiation detection equipment.

If someone came by, the mobile home wasn’t locked and if they chose to steal what remaining food was there, they could take it with thanks giving. They wouldn’t get much because we’d hauled most of what there was down to the shelter, believing we had plenty of time. We did get into our LTS foods, but only those we had extra of, like the powdered whole eggs. During our time, we either ate something and eggs or pancakes; something could be bacon, ham or steak. (Thawed a sirloin tip roast, cut off some thin slices to fry and baked the rest.)

We watched movies of the TV, read books from our library of survival oriented books and even some Army Field Manuals. When the time to leave came, we were more than ready. Mary still had some time to go, so we went looking for medical care. There are many hospitals in Midland named Memorial or something Memorial. We found one Memorial open and doing what they could to care for a lot of people suffering from radiation poisoning. Marty and I were told to wait until Mary was in labor and bring her in to the ER.

During our shelter stay, we were on the amateur radio frequently, listening and communicating occasionally with the Harris shelter. We never spoke with Mr. Harris directly, just a communications guy with his security team. The whole security team plus Harris’s extended family were in the shelter. The only gripe was the food; it wasn’t steak or lobster except for Harris and his family. I’d marveled at the kitchen we’d installed, Viking electric range, Frymaster two well deep fat fryer, commercial electric grill, pizza oven, the best of everything, including 4 Marvel 30ft<sup>3</sup> commercial freezers.

That shelter was 100 feet square or 10,000ft<sup>2</sup>. It had a bit of everything including a gym with workout equipment. Two 200 gallon-electric hot water heaters, GE would be happy, the shelter was totally electric. The bunkroom for the security people would sleep 36 even though some would be on duty at all times. The bunks were stacked two high and had a foot locker at each end plus a school style locker for each individual. Two of his people were fully trained, experienced paramedics he hired away from Seattle. They were, in the words of some, the best trained Paramedics in the world.

The Seattle Fire Department's Medic One Program began in 1970 when the first group of firefighters was trained as Paramedics in cooperation with Harborview Medical Center and the University of Washington.

## Goals – Chapter 7

Since then, Seattle's Medic One Program has become world famous due to the training, dedication and first-rate pre-hospital emergency patient care Paramedics deliver within the community.

Medic One directly provides the City of Seattle with Advanced Life Support activities that, in the past, could only be performed by licensed physicians. The Department responds to approximately 28,000 Basic Life Support (BLS) alarms and 25,000 Advanced Life Support (ALS) alarms per year. In addition to these alarms, the Paramedics respond on all working fires, hazardous materials and rescue responses.

Well, plan B had been to have those Paramedics deliver the baby if we couldn't find an open hospital. During the stay, when I brought the subject up, I was told to radio if they were needed for anything, per Mr. Harris.

In the story *Light's Out* by Halfast (David Crawford), had to deal with a Mr. Harris too. Our Mr. Harris wasn't the same as his Mr. Davis, but he seemed to be more like than unlike. Nice guy, as far as I was concerned, but I wouldn't ask him for a windmill if my life depended on it. I suppose our bonuses added up to about what his Mr. Davis gave Mark and Jim.

There is something you have to recognize, we were frugal to a fault. Without that endearing quality, neither Marty nor I would have what we have. I was single and invested the most cash, but Marty provided extensive sweat equity. Plus, when I married, she came from the fold of people who understood all about what it took to live in a world that had lost its mind. If anything, Mary was more in tune with some aspects of that than I was.

The name we'd picked out was Rachael Jean for my mother and her mother. You have plenty of time during a shelter stay to do all those put off tasks that you might not have done earlier. I should note that except for the powdered whole eggs, of which we had an extra case or two, we didn't need to get into our LTS food. We were running the generator at roughly 75% load and I guessed we were burning around 0.85gph of our diesel. Our shelter stay was 147 days or 3,540 hours which translated to about 3,000 gallons of diesel. We'd changed the oil 14 times and were working on the second and last drum of oil. Harris's shelter had a separate mechanical room connected via a tunnel. We'd put in 10 55-gallon drums of oil for him.

Our priorities were having the baby, locating more oil plus filters, topping off the diesel tank (lower priority) and making certain we were left alone in peace until the National Guard came in to help deal with the other survivors. The easiest of the tasks proved to be that of lowest priority, locating a diesel tanker. Marty hadn't told me but he had a case each of the air and oil filters plus a few fuel filters, making that priority lower. Unlike some generators, the Quiet Diesel 12.5 required all three types of filters and oil certified for diesel engines. We had an empty drum to put the dirty oil in, if you're curious.



“Can you get the tractor with the backhoe and loader?”

“Maybe, if someone didn’t steal it.”

“Well, nobody stole any of our vehicles.”

“True, but two cars and my pickup run on gas, not diesel and you only have 500 gallons of gas. How much PRI-G do you have?”

“I started off with 6 gallons. When I got into the first gallon, I ordered six more. I also ordered 30 gallons of PRI-D. With what I already had, we’ll have plenty of time to go to Houston and get more.”

“Why Houston?”

“That’s where it’s made by Power Research Inc.”

“Surely they nuked Houston.”

“I agree; that’s why I stocked up. We can always ask Mr. Harries, he bought PRI-D and PRI-G by the 55-gallon drum. That had to be a special order because I think the largest container I’ve heard of is the five gallon cans.”

“Should we try to get with him? He has those security forces and there’s safety in numbers.”

“We can talk about it, but I’m not sure I’d want to do that. There’s just something about the guy and his setup that bothers me. Nothing I can put my finger on, but still...”

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“It’s time.”

“Time for what?”

“Time to have our baby. I assume I can come out of the shelter now, right?”

“Marty, hold down the fort, we’re going to Memorial.”

I declined the opportunity to be in the delivery room, but Mary couldn’t wait and delivered right in the ER so I got to see it after all. They took our insurance information although I don’t know why; maybe someday they’ll be able to bill Blue Cross. They were crowded beyond belief and didn’t even keep Mary overnight. They cleaned up Rachael, checked her out and sent us home. They gave me the page for the birth certificate and

told me to fill in our parts and bring it back. It would be filed when they could. I kept a copy just in case we didn't get a certificate of live birth.

"She's beautiful."

"Well, how much did she weigh and how big was she?"

"Seven pounds even, 20 inches long."

"Why are you back so quickly?"

"They were overcrowded. I have the paperwork to fill out and return."

"Cheryl will help Mary. Do you want them in the shelter or in the trailer?"

"What's the latest radiation reading?"

"Roughly 30mR."

"They can stay in the trailer. I'd say we're in good shape; we have a fuel tanker full of diesel, stabilized, we have enough food for a long time and we have a means of protection."

"I went after the tractor while you were gone. It's sitting out back."

"Yes, I noticed. I was thinking. We could go to the company and load up some of that chain link fence we use for projects and enclose the immediate area inside a fence. I could leave Mr. Harris a note telling him we took it and the posts. Or, I could talk to him on the radio and get permission first. Maybe that way the security team could help erect it."

"It's worth a shot; we don't have any shortage of chain link fence. We could include the garden area, too. It would be nice if we could find some M-14 anti-personnel mines."

"You've been reading too much patriot fiction Marty Harrelson."

"Apparently all of our bouncing Betties are deployed in Korea. The M-14 doesn't kill, it just incapacitates. We have to think ahead here Ted. We have plenty of arms but no munitions like mines and rockets."

"So you want to go to an Army depot somewhere and *borrow* mines and rockets?"

"Only after we get the fence up. Hell, maybe one of those Special Forces guys knows where we can get some."

Mr. Harris said to take what we needed but not clean him out. He thought it was a good idea and would also fence in his area. He would loan us a few of his operators to erect the fence. We hauled the fencing and it was up in about three days. Marty asked one of the operators about the rockets and mines. The guy laughed and asked how many we wanted. Marty told him all that we could get and help if it were available in laying out the minefield.

To this day I don't know where they got the stuff. They included the M-14AP mines with the washers removed and M-19AT mines with the plastic body. They also had M-72A7 rockets. There was more on the 5 ton truck than they unloaded so I guessed they would be mining Mr. Harris's shelter area. I overheard someone saying something about a second and third truck.

When they finished, they gave us a detailed map of where the mines were located and what type was in each location. We would have to be very careful leaving and entering our little sanctuary. There was only one vehicle path in and out and it wasn't in a straight line. It was marked if you knew what to look for so we wouldn't blow ourselves up. There were also signs with the universal symbol for a minefield.

We tilled the garden spot and under Cheryl's tutelage, planted the crops she wanted. We didn't quite have enough jars to can all we expected to produce, but the city of Midland had announced they'd be setting up a Farmer's Market to help provide food for the populous. Police wearing Fully Encapsulated Radiation Shielding Garments had been sent out and they had seized every source of food in Midland well before most people left shelter. They were very well armed, M16A3s. It wasn't 100%, but it was pretty darn good.

We could actually grow anything and we had seed for most things. We didn't have tilling instruments for the tractor though, and until we could locate some, we wouldn't be trying to farm. There was also a question if we could generate enough water from the well to irrigate everything. We didn't have livestock to feed, so field crops would probably be limited to wheat and/or oats and/or corn. An acre should produce enough for our needs. I estimated, based on some prior research, that one acre would produce about 40 bushels of wheat or oats and maybe 100 bushels of corn. I am not, repeat not, a farmer.

"We have security covered and the garden in, Ted. Have you given any thought to getting livestock and planting grain for them?"

"I figured to just grow one acre of grain for our consumption. There are plenty of ranchers who grow beef or pork. I suppose we could get chickens for eggs and meat if we could find some."

"What, no rabbits or fish?"

"I don't like rabbit Marty. If we want fish, we can go fishing at someplace like Ev Spence Reservoir."

“Yeah, if they let it fill up again and add some of the striped bass.”

It was a good bet that the reservoir would refill due to the reduced population. However, unless there were some remaining striped bass, there might not be many/any fish. In its heyday, the Reservoir produced large catches, but by the mid '90s, a change in water use drained most of the Reservoir. It was fed by the Colorado River.

The Colorado River is the 18th longest river in the US and the longest river with both its source and mouth within Texas; however its drainage basin and some of its usually dry tributaries do extend into New Mexico. The 862-mile (1,387 km) long river flows generally southeast from Dawson County through Marble Falls, Austin, Bastrop, Smithville, La Grange, Columbus, Wharton, and Bay City before emptying into the Gulf of Mexico at Matagorda Bay. There are two long rivers in the US named the Colorado River.

Soldiers sometimes call combat rock and roll time. At least, they do in the movies. I had no idea and Marty said that he didn't either. We were just two men with their families living inside a chain link fence about 10 miles from Midland, Texas. We were okay for now; we had 11,000+16,000-gallons of diesel fuel and 8,000+400-gallons of gasoline. On top of that, we had about 4,000-gallons of propane, the tank plus a delivery truck.

The trailer had a fireplace and over the years, I had purchased 30 full cords of firewood. A trip to town allowed us to get baby food, but the cops were limiting even that. So, of course, we all took a turn and got 4 limited supplies. Added to what we already had, we'd somehow manage to get by. They were keeping a list of purchasers based on their driver's license name. We even managed to get some treats for Marty's kids.

Clothing wouldn't be a problem for now and Cheryl said she had all the clothes from both Michael and Susan and they might be used but were well taken care of. We decided to stop using the Bobbie nickname for Robert and stick with Robert and Rachael. Rach, Ray, Rae, Chel, Shelly and Cha didn't trip any triggers. There aren't a lot of nicknames for Rachael. It took a bit of time for Robert to get used to not being called Bobbie, but he was young and wouldn't remember.

We had an occasion to go to Mr. Harris's shelter. There were no mine warning signs posted although we both knew they had a couple of truckloads. We stayed back and called on the radio. It was well that we did, they had about double the number of mines installed that we did and they somewhere come up with the M-16s and M-18As. The M-16 is the bouncing Betty and the M-18 is the Claymore. They also had some kind of big gun mounted on a truck that we later learned was a Mk44 Bushmaster II, 30mm cannon. In non-metric sizing, a 1.18 inch cannon. The latest I'd read about was the Bushmaster III 35/50 chaingun. It was 35mm (1.38") that could be converted to 50mm (2"). Maybe he couldn't get an import permit.

## Goals – Chapter 8

Although our minefield wasn't enclosed with a fence, we had signs. Their field was neither enclosed nor had signs. I got that hinky feeling about this operation again. Their path into the compound was much longer and more convoluted than ours, too. We left my pickup outside and rode in with them.

"What's up? You obviously came through okay."

"All this security you have gave me a hinky feeling and I just wanted to make sure you were okay."

"Right as rain, thanks for your concern."

"I noticed that you don't have your minefield marked and you have a cannon."

"Couldn't get an import permit for the Bushmaster III or I have one of those. How are you two doing?"

"Mary had her baby and we named her Rachael. We've stocked up on fuel and are growing a garden. Like I told your man on the radio, we figured they hit Holloman Air Force Base."

"That's a fact. Obama was sheltering there because they apparently had ample warning. He was already in the air when Iran attacked Israel and they diverted there rather than going to Cheyenne Mountain. He would have been better off sticking with his original plan; they took out the Holloman bunker."

"So who is President?"

"Biden. He diverted to Cheyenne Mountain."

"Have you heard anything about when the National Guard will show up?"

"It won't be for a while; they're mostly dealing with Dallas, Houston and Austin. Dallas took three hits as did Houston. Austin only got one."

"You seem to be well informed boss."

"Low friends in high places? No, actually we got most of the info off the SINCGARS."

"We don't have one of those."

"I'll give you one and the disk with the codes. It's already set to what we're using. It's a 28vdc radio so I'll give you a power supply. It has 6 presets for the frequency hopping

and our private channel is channel 6. Talk to my radio guy, he will tell you who is on which preset. Anything else?”

“No, thank you.”

“No problem, be safe.”

I believe he meant that although, he almost said it as an afterthought as he was moving off. Mr. Harris was concentrating on something else. We left with the radio, power supply and antenna in hand. My questions, for the most part, remained unanswered. His responses were less than revealing of whatever plans he may have. It wasn't Harris who had me worried; it was the 36 men in the Special Force group. It just wasn't normal for a man to surround his family with that kind of security force. He was wealthy, but not the richest man in Midland. Plus he seemed to know things that no one else did, like the President being dead.

“How did it go?”

“We learned that Obama is dead; killed in the attack on Holloman Air Force Base. Biden went to Cheyenne Mountain and is now President. Mr. Harris gave us a SINCGARS Echo model radio, power supply, antenna and encryption disk. Their minefield is bigger than ours and it's not posted. The most surprising thing was him having a Bushmaster II 30mm cannon.”

“Big boy toy?”

“I don't know, Mary; that guard force of his gives me the willies.”

“We're fairly secure here with a minefield and a fence.”

“Yes we are. However, those security guys planted our mines and made us a map. What's to say they didn't keep a copy for themselves?”

“One would have to assume they did, in case we needed help.”

“One thing is certain; Mr. Harris's compound is better guarded than the White House. It wouldn't surprise me to learn that they even have Stinger missiles to go along with that gun and the extra types of mines they put in, M-16s and M-18s. I'd try and rearrange our minefield, but I expect they put on those anti handling devices and I don't know how to disable them. I don't have a copy of that Field Manual on my laptop.”

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Our garden yielded well and when we ran out of jars, the balance was sold at the Farmer's Market. We tried to trade for more Mason jars, when we could; offering what amounted to a premium. There must have been some sheeple in our customer group

because we did manage to get about a gross of quarts and 5 dozen pints. We didn't offer any canned goods, only the unused fresh produce. The trades varied and even went so far as our being offered M193 5.56 ammo on stripper clips in the sealed can. The trader claimed he'd had it since 2008 so it probably wouldn't be any good, but we could reload the brass. I knew better and was pretty sure he knew too, what with that GI haircut. He turned out to be our best customer.

However, it cooled off earlier than it usually does. July, historically, is the hottest month with an average high temperature of about 95. It got down to 60° during July this year. Fortunately, it didn't reduce our harvest and we were knee deep in canned goods. We also had all of the meat in the freezer but opted to having several meatless days each week to extend the supply.

We did find chickens, a rather large flock. Are chickens immune to radiation? Well... Chicken in every pot; chicken strips, even Chicken Little. During the 1930s most chickens were raised in America for egg production. Fried chicken served at Grandmother's Sunday mid-day dinner was a rare, special treat. Then, customs changed. After World War II, an elderly man named Sanders — dressed in a white suit — changed American food patterns forever. By 1998, Americans were eating nearly 50 pounds of chicken annually. Who says one person cannot make a difference?

## DOOMSDAY DIET: DINING IN THE DARKNESS

How to plan for the unthinkable? The Cold War placed a heavy burden on Americans: should shelters be constructed in the family backyard? What should one do IF the bomb came...? Survival manuals provided advice...

## FOOD SUPPLY REQUIREMENTS

As an absolute minimum, a 90 day supply of food is recommended; 6 months is more realistic; 24 months would not be beyond the realm of common sense...

## UNAVAILABLE FOOD

The following conditions will probably prevail in the event of a nuclear attack. Fresh milk will be impossible to obtain and canned evaporated or dry powdered milk must be substituted. Fresh eggs will be scarce. Since chickens have great tolerance for radiation, fresh eggs will probably be one of the first staples available after a nuclear attack...

## SELECTING FOOD

Buy only foods that will be enjoyed because shelter occupants will be under emotional stress. When buying shelter food select proper size containers to eliminate leftovers that might be difficult to preserve.

## SHELTER FOODS

Store, prepare, and serve the following inside shelter facilities: bacon; corned beef hash; sausage; meat balls; chili con carne; tamales; chipped beef; salmon steak; crab meat; shrimp; clams; oysters; smoked bologna; country cured ham; au gratin potatoes; spaghetti; macaroni; buckwheat mix; canned cheese; tomatoes; brown bread; flour; relish; maple syrup; oatmeal; hot cereals; baby foods as needed...

It might be sensible to keep a few packages of vegetable seeds in the shelter for a do-it-yourself post-war project.

Yeah, another sheeple...only store what you like to eat. Wouldn't it be awful if you didn't care for oysters and you had nothing but clams and oysters? Why au gratin potatoes and not scalloped potatoes? Don't you have to bake them? If so, why don't you have a refrigerator? Hormel still make canned tamales, regular and hot, but they're hard to find in some locations and you have to order them directly from the Hormel Store in Austin, Minnesota.

We were beginning to get into our LTS foods, to some degree. It was mostly things we could reproduce, wheat, corn and beans. We had several of the 50# bags of Jasmine rice we'd picked up at Costco when we drove up there. Six hundred pounds of rice should last for a while, wouldn't you think? They looked at us like we were stark raving crazy with a flatbed full of rice. And then, we went back and picked up 24 of the 25# bags of pinto beans and a second cart loaded down with those trays of Folgers coffee. By the time we were finished at Costco that day, we probably had a ton and one half of food, including 6 100# bags of flour and 6 25# bags of sugar. Costco had those huge containers of spices and we made sure we had enough because if something did happen, we didn't want to run out.

They all said it on the websites, "It's not if, but when and what..." Mary and I believed them, Thank God.

Anti-handling devices are only used with anti-tank mines, but I didn't know that. It didn't really matter because they put the mines in what they called a standard pattern minefield. They said something else that made no sense; they were using the Korea only mine laying patterns. For no more mines than they lay, it took them long enough. However, they assured us that no one could get through that minefield without the map or by digging their way in an inch at a time. We saw a few vehicles that slowed and left in a hurry once they could see the signs.

I don't know what Marty and I or Mary and Cheryl expected, but post war life was downright boring. You could see down the road for 2-3 miles in either direction and with so little to do, we got the farming implements and turned the soil for the following year. We planned of producing crops in rotation, wheat-corn-oats-beans-rice. A second acre was seeded into grass in case we ended up with livestock like beef or horses. We got 15



pounds of pure live alfalfa seed and were told to use two thirds of it. We contracted the harvests in exchange for some of our garden crops and fuel. I think he was more interested in the fuel than vegetables...

“Either we get our own trailer house or we’re moving back to town.”

“Marty, we have gas, power, water and sewage here. You probably wouldn’t have any of those if you moved back to your house.”

“Mary and you are in the trailer, we’re still in the shelter at night. I may be getting claustrophobic.”

“We can go look for a trailer for you.”

“Yeah, but can we get it through the minefield?”

“That’s why we have a radio, to call in the Calvary.”

“Is there enough room inside the fence for a second trailer without moving the fence?”

“It would appear so. If not, we can move the fence.”

“How do you want to handle it?”

“We find the trailer first and tow it back here. Then we can call over to Harris and get his guys to move the minefield. What do you want for a trailer, new or used?”

“Well, all things equal, why not a new one with new furniture? It appears to me that about only 30-35% of the population of Midland survived the attack so maybe we can find a new one and not have to fight anyone to get it?”

“And if we do?”

“Plan B”

On the way into town, he explained that Plan B was taking whatever we could find. Plan A was to find a new trailer on a dealer’s lot that was ready to roll. We’d hook up to it with a delivery vehicle and drive by a closed furniture store and equip the new home before we pulled it out to the property. We had to be sure to get the mobile home stands and the skirting before we left the dealer. It was, he said, a one shot deal.

First, we had to find an abandoned dealership. That took 3 tries. When we did, we couldn’t get the delivery truck to start until we tried a shot of ether. We hooked up the home and went looking for the stands and skirting, having no idea how many stands we’d need or how much skirting. We figured out the skirting by calculating the circumference of the trailer. We just took all of the stands we could lay our hands on. Aside

from the fuel, this had been our first salvaging operation. When we returned to the property, we parked the rig and called Davis on the radio explaining what we need. We were told someone would be over first thing in the morning.

## Goals – Chapter 8

At oh-dark-thirty a Crew Cab pickup pulled in and six men began removing the mines. We heard them when they started up the tractor pulling the home and they placed it in the only place it could go. They disconnected the tractor and drove it back where we'd parked it. I went out and offered them coffee, but they declined. Watching them replace the anti-personnel mines was the first time I realized that they didn't have an anti-handling device.

"What, no anti-handling devices?"

"The anti-tank mines have them so leave them alone. Besides, we're taking the safety clips for the M-14s with us. You need something moved just call. If you need something replaced..."

"I know, just call."

"Well, we used up the M-14s so if we have to replace them, we'll be using M-16s. There one bad motor scooter, don't go near them."

Motor scooter? Must have cleaned it up for my tender ears.

"Okay thanks."

"Anything else?"

"I guess not, thank you."

It was still oh-dark-thirty when they finished up and left. By the time Marty came out of the shelter, I had placed all of the stands where I thought they should go and all we had to do was raise them in place and remove the travel carriage from the mobile home. Cheryl came up and after she and Mary had coffee, began to move their things from the shelter to the new trailer. The kids watched Robert and Rachael and Mary helped. Before sundown, the trailer was ready to go except for water, sewer and power.

"I need my own generator. Where did you get yours?"

"In Odessa at Cummins Southern Plains, Inc."

"Let's go."

"Burglary in the nighttime is a serious offense."

"So?"

"So, I'll get my rifle and you can drive back the delivery truck."

We drove into Midland and dropped off the truck. Then we spent ½ hour on the road traveling to Odessa. I didn't want to come back for anything; so once we were inside, we got that heavy mother in the pickup (800+ pounds) got all of the oil, air and gas filters we could find, all the approved oil they had onsite and boogied. They would take care of the power but we needed pipe to attach the gas, water and sewage. It was around 3am when we got back home, bone tired and weary to the core. I told Marty I planned to sleep in.

"You look tired."

"I am tired. We could have waited a day to get that generator for them. I told him I planned to sleep in late."

"Good, I get you up."

It wasn't until the next morning that I knew what she meant with her comment. She had my complete and undivided attention.

When I did get around, Marty was just pulling in with a truckload of pipe. He had black steel pipe for the diesel fuel, PVC soil pipe and copper water pipe. Apparently he'd used the loader to unload the generator and it was already wired in just waiting for a fuel line.

"Wouldn't it have been smarter to put the generator down with the other one and just run wires?"

"Couldn't find enough wire and couldn't move it into the tunnel by myself."

"If we do it my way, Marty, you have power from the power company if and when it comes back on. I'll be glad help you move the generator and I can go after wire while you're digging the trench for the water and septic lines."

There was a stand above the first generator for a second because I had contemplated putting in a second one. I got the stand welded up and installed but got busy building those shelters and never got the project finished. If I had, we wouldn't have needed to go skulking around in Odessa at midnight. Considering the distance and the 104 available amps, I would need AWG gauge 0 Cable which was rated for 150amps. AWG 1 would work if the run were short enough, but why take a chance? 00 and 000 would work too and be a bigger pain in the butt.

I got four spools, red, black, white and green and we could match the colors that Jake had used when he'd wired the genset in. You know, 240 takes two hots, one neutral and one ground. The ATS was rated at 200amps because the generator was rated at 104amps. We had a second ATS for Marty and put jumpers for commercial power in. Simple, no? Not really, 0 Cable is very stiff and about ½" or more including insulation. And, I hoped that Marty had enough septic pipe that we could put the Cables in PVC.

Sometimes you just can't catch a break, but Marty had so much septic pipe, we could put in a third trailer.

What was missing? A propane tank, but we could both run off the same tank and just fill it more often. The trailer came with a new refrigerator, dishwasher, stove and garbage disposal. The stove would run on either propane or natural gas; it had propane installed and natural gas jets in an envelope taped to the oven. The same applied to the furnace. I know because the envelope was labeled natural gas jets.

By sundown we had it all connected and had the small final skirt section in place. We'd even hammered together steps for the front and back entrances. Their new trailer was a three bedroom, 2 bath (16x80) and much larger than ours, I think I'm jealous. Before too long, we'll need a larger trailer too, maybe we should go find me one and put in third trailer I mentioned. The only problem was that it didn't seem that there wasn't room inside the fence. If you need something replaced...I know, just call.

"Honey their trailer is bigger than ours and once our children grow up a little, we'll need three bedrooms too."

"Can you get another generator?"

"I doubt it."

"That puts it in perspective, you may replace the trailer, but you can't make the area larger and add a third."

"How about we put the new trailer on the other side of the shelter and leave our trailer where it is?"

"Is there room?"

"Just barely I think, but I'm not sure."

"Okay, you may add a third trailer, but you have to shop around for a third generator."

That sounded an awful like marching instructions, don't you agree? Okay, one each 3 bedroom, two bath 16x80 singlewide mobile home with the desert package (better insulation) including all the amenities Marty got.

"Everything work okay Marty?"

"Yes and no. I got a bigger bed than our old one but forgot to get bed linen. I have to run into to Midland and fix that immediately."

"Good, Mary and I were talking last night and we want to keep up with you and Cheryl. We have a boy and girl too, and one of these days will need three bedrooms. Most of

our furniture is new so we will stick with what we have except the extras the new trailer will have in it. Let me know when you're ready to go and I'll get my things around."

"There was that other one with the different floor plan. Let's take it and then the guy will only have to file one insurance claim."

"We'll do it the same as last time, tow it out here and then call Mr. Harris. Do you have plenty of pipes in case we have to reroute them?"

"No sweat, I cleaned them out."

That explained why his pickup had been so full. The water system for our trailer delivered the water in galvanized, not copper, pipes. He even had an assortment of that and a pipe threader. We could run the pipes to the connections on the new trailer without difficulty. I wonder if he had started a reaction in metals where he connected copper pipe to the galvanized pipe the well-used. (A plastic-lined dielectric nipple helps prevent corrosion when joining dissimilar metals like copper and galvanized pipes.)

I guess the reason that all of the security people that Mr. Harris had were male because you couldn't be Infantry or Special Forces if you were a female. Pretty damned narrow minded if you ask me. So we towed the remaining singlewide back to the place and parked it outside. I called Harris's comms guy who said, "Tomorrow morning." I took that to mean oh-dark-thirty and told Mary we'd have to get up around 4am. We did a tour of our new home to be and she thought it was better than the one Marty and Cheryl had. There wasn't a nickel's difference between the two, just a different layout. They were both 1,216ft<sup>2</sup>. Marty had floor plan number 8081 and we had floor plan number 8085. (Sales literature in the trailers.) Ours included the glamour bath option.

What kind of clock does the military use? The reason I ask is because oh-dark-thirty on their clock must have been an hour ahead of oh-dark-thirty on our clock. They cleared the mines, moved the new trailer in on the other side of the shelter and replaced the mines, again.

"Coffee?"

"Thanks, gotta go. We'll take a rain check."

That was an improvement, the last time they didn't even take a rain check. These were the same six that had moved the mines and Marty's home. They were probably Mr. Harris's public relations team. Hard to say, they were equipped with Kimber Tactical II pistols and HK 417 rifles, the military versions with suppressors and one with the HK AG-C/EGLM grenade launcher. Funny, I don't remember seeing any 40mm grenades.

I knew we couldn't mount AG-C/EGLMs on our M1As without changing to something with a rail and I sure didn't want to mount them on the MR556s. They were poodle shooters, but poodle shooters that worked. Our children would be trained to use them

as soon as they could hold them and remember the safety rules. Both of Marty's kids could shoot, more or less, and were getting better.

"Will you give me a hand? They moved the furniture but just dumped it. Cheryl and I can rearrange some of it while Marty and you finish moving things into the home from our old home."

"But, we have to hook everything up."

It was more how she said it than what she said. We had everything moved in short order. I fired up the 2k generator to cool the refrigerator off. Then, Marty and I spliced, connected, moved and installed the septic, water, gas and finally electric. I stuck with galvanized pipe so I wouldn't have to get that fancy coupler. He drove the delivery truck back to town and I followed in my pickup. We were short on lamps because we had an extra bedroom so he and I stopped by a store and picked some up; hanging swag lamps which were generally impossible to find unless you looked on the internet...

If it wasn't anything else, WW III had been a total inconvenience. The company I worked for was shut down for the duration. All essential services had all but ceased to exist. Available law enforcement was minimal. The National Guard was busy elsewhere, only one hospital remained open and I wondered if they would be resupplied from the National Strategic Stockpile. If you wanted to eat, you grew your own or traded for it. If you ran low on ammo, you'd better know someone who stored a lot, the existing supplies had been cleaned out early because the cops were watching the grocery stores, which was stupid considering their just in time resupply practices. There was a large amount at point W (warehouse) but only enough at point S (store) to meet demand until they could resupply, usually about 3 days.

As practicing preppers, we weren't dependent on the JIT system except for a few things and could hopefully outlast the stores even if it meant several trips to fill up a hole like bath tissue, coffee or feminine hygiene. If our five year crop rotation for the acre of farmland worked, those three items were probably what we would need the most of and we planned accordingly. Conservatively speaking, we had a four year supply of those essentials and substitutes in some cases like Kleenex and tea.

While we generally felt secure in our little enclave, we thought about what could be done to provide better security. There was no way the singlewides were bulletproof. We had the tractor with the loader and backhoe and the farming implements and wondered what we could do to make the place more secure. One thing we could do, that would take time, was to erect a berm between the fence and our homes. We weren't short of Texas soil; we had 7 acres of it. The bucket held about 1 yard and it would probably mean a jillion trips to haul enough soil to do it.

## Goals – Chapter 9

The thing about it was, we had the jillion hours to spend. When we weren't working the field or the garden, we had plenty of time on our hands. We could spend 5 days per week hauling soil, one day out salvaging and rest on the seventh. Time was on our side. And, just in case, our old trailer was sitting there, empty and almost in the way, but available.

*Time is on my side, yes it is  
Time is on my side, yes it is*

*Now you always say  
That you want to be free  
But you'll come running back (said you would baby)  
You'll come running back (I said so many times before)  
You'll come running back to me*

*Oh, time is on my side, yes it is  
Time is on my side, yes it is*

*You're searching for good times  
But just wait and see  
You'll come running back (I won't have to worry no more)  
You'll come running back (spend the rest of my life with you, baby)  
You'll come running back to me*

*Go ahead, go ahead and light up the town  
And baby, do everything your heart desires  
Remember, I'll always be around  
And I know, I know  
Like I told you so many times before  
You're gonna come back, baby  
'Cause I know  
You're gonna come back knocking  
Yeah, knocking right on my door  
Yes, yes!*

*Well, time is on my side, yes it is  
Time is on my side, yes it is  
'Cause I got the real love  
The kind that you need  
You'll come running back (said you would, baby)  
You'll come running back (I always said you would)  
You'll come running back, to me  
Yes time, time, time is on my side, yes it is  
Time, time, time is on my side, yes it is*



*Oh, time, time, time is on my side, yes it is*  
*I said, time, time, time is on my side, yes it is*  
*Oh, time, time, time is on my side*  
*Yeah, time, time, time is on my side*

The Rolling Stones from *Fallen* starring Denzel Washington

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“How high are we going to make this thing?”

“Frankly Marty, I’m not sure. We’ll just haul soil until it’s high enough.”

“It would be a lot easier if we got a dump truck. We could fill it, haul the soil and then dump it. We could use the truck to compact the soil at first and later do that late in the day, after we’d dumped several more loads, using the tractor.”

You have to figure that a mobile home is at least 8’ high and sits about 2½’ above the ground. To provide protection for the homes, the berm would need to be about 12’ high. The area of an equilateral triangle is the square root of three divided by four times length of one side squared. The height of an equilateral triangle is the square root of three divided by 2 times the length of one side. Since we knew the height we wanted, we knew that double the height equaled the square root of three multiplied times the length of one side. So, 24 equals 1.73205 times the length and the length equals the former divided by the latter or 13.86 feet... call it 14 feet.

Volume equals areas times length. Therefore, 1.73205 divided by 4 times 14 squared was the area which turned out to be 84.87ft<sup>2</sup>. The berm would be approximately 400’ long. 84.87ft<sup>2</sup> times 400 equaled 33,948ft<sup>3</sup> or ~1,257 yards. Not quite a jillion, but a lot. Plus we had to leave a gap to get the vehicles in and out. A gap in our defenses would not be a good idea, so we needed some sort of gate that would, at the minimum, be bulletproof. Our final solution was practical, if not inspired. We found road plates, a lot of them. We found 12” thick steel pipes, enough of them. We found industrial strength hinges, large enough to support several tons of weight. We bolted two layers of plates together, attached the hinges, planted the posts in holes twice as deep in the ground as they were above the ground and filled around them with concrete.

On the backside of the posts, we stacked road plate and moved soil up against the plates to hold them in place. Once we had approximately 1,257 yards of soil moved and compacted, we hung the gate. Man, was it a heavy mother! It overlapped the post on the other side and you couldn’t push it in with less than a huge caterpillar tractor. We dug another post hole and added a second pipe that we pulled just before the concrete was totally set. We’d swing the gate shut and drop the second post in place holding the gate shut. Entering and leaving was an experience in and of itself. However, we were very secure and it had taken only about 6 months to get it done. On most days we’d managed to move 4 or 5 dump truck loads of soil or about 20-25 yards.

In and of itself, the berm would provide little protection. You'll have to remember that the front edge of the berm was a chain link fence that stood behind a Korea standard pattern minefield which used non-detectable mines. Considering the length of the berm, the four of us would each be responsible for protecting about 100' of the berm. I'm no soldier but that seems like a lot. Even with Marty's two kids, Michael and Susan, it would be 67'.

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We'd need 40 shooters to be able to place them 10' apart and 200 to have shooters shoulder to shoulder. We asked the comms guy and he said the ideal distance was 10 meters apart and 400 feet would require a squad. While I had him on the SINCGARS, I ask him why we couldn't hear those transmission they were hearing. He explained that we had an Echo model SINCGARS while they also had a Harris radio, the AN/PTC-118F(C).

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Everyone needs goals to get through life. If you don't know where you want to go, how can you map out a route? I stayed single longer than the average guy, not so much because I didn't like women, because I'd been concentrating on my preps. Between saving, a small inheritance and shopping for good prices, I'd eventually got what I wanted. Then as pure dumb luck would have it, she showed up with a black eye and the rest was history. My rule is that no man should hit a woman, no matter how much they may seem to deserve it. In a life or death situation, it would be better to just shoot them and have done with it. Besides, my Mary could hold her own and always went armed.

With only six people to man the berm, we were short by half of what we needed, a dozen or more. However, they had a task getting through to us, a minefield and a fence just to reach the berm. I wasn't overconfident but felt we should be okay. It was the activities outside the compound that were more disturbing. Those included our one day a week salvage trips and working the two acres of ground.

If we were going to try and raise livestock, we needed a fenced in area planted in some kind of grass other than alfalfa. The first question that came to mind was where do we put it? Passerby's could see it if it were by the two tilled acres and we might wake up one morning with our livestock missing. The best answer seemed to build the enclosure behind the compound. An acre is 43,560ft<sup>2</sup>. A perfectly square acre is 208.7' on a side. I hate odd numbers and bigger is better so Marty and I agreed to a square that was 220' or 1/3 furlong per side, about 1.1 acre.

If we had only cattle, we could have gotten by with barbed wire. However, what if we got hogs? Woven wire on the bottom, topped by barbed wire. However, what if we got horses? Woven wire on the bottom and smooth wire on the top? Would the cattle respect smooth wire? Woven wire on the bottom and smooth wire on the top plus one

strand of electric fence should do it. We'd have to replace the battery from time to time, not a lot of trouble.

On a salvage trip, we looked for fencing. Woven wire and smooth wire, a twisted pair, were available as were T posts and wooden posts; more of the former than the latter. An electric fence kit was also available that was solar powered. We got everything we needed and hauled it back home. With ample time available, we found a posthole digger to mount on the tractor and were able to fill the holes in our supplies. It was quilted Northern rather than Charmin, but hey, it was soft.

We used 3 wooden posts at each corner and every third post was a wooden post until we got to the middle of each side where we did what we must to have a strong fence. As it worked out the two to one ratio of T posts to wooden posts was perfect with no fence section with extra posts of either style. Uncertain whether a cattle guard was the best choice, we installed a heavy gate. We also pushed a pipe through the berm and ran water to the acre to provide water for the livestock. Next we seeded that acre in a mix of Buffalo grass and Blue gamma to create a small short grass prairie. We planned to supplement that grass with the alfalfa and maybe some grain.

It took us 4 weeks to complete the fence and install the gate. Next we located a 2½ ton truck with a stake bed and went looking for abandoned livestock. The primary choice was cattle, but we also found a small herd of hogs. Satisfied that we had all or more than the acre could support, we parked the truck and went looking for horses, towing a 4 horse trailer. We found a herd of 9 horses and a dead rancher and his family. We buried them and began to haul the horses to their new home. He had several tons of hay and grain stored and after we spent 3 trips getting the horses, we got a different truck to haul the grain, the dump truck we used before. Salvaging was taking totally abandoned property, not property which belonged to people who were temporarily absent. Taking property in that case or in the case where the owners were present was plain looting. The owners were present, but dead, you call it.

His grain was stored in silos and there wasn't any way for us to erect a silo so we only hauled about an (estimated) one year supply at a time. The baled hay was a different matter, we parked the dump truck and got a lowboy trailer for the semi-tractor that was now in permanent residence and hauled all of the hay.

"We can't grow enough food for us and them on one acre Ted."

"How big should it be?"

"Figure an acre of corn, and acre of oats and an acre for us plus the acre of alfalfa. Horses and cattle are primarily grazing animals and we can supplement that acre of grass with hay because there isn't any way 6 cattle, 9 horses and 6 hogs can survive on an acre of grass."

“Look Marty, Mary said a horse would eat about 15-25 pounds of grass a day. You can produce about 3 tons of alfalfa per acre. One acre of alfalfa won’t support one horse. We’d need 33 tons of hay per year or about 11 acres just for the 9 horses. I don’t have any idea about the cattle or the hogs. We probably need up to 30 acres of alfalfa, 5 acres of corn, the same of soybeans and oats. There is plenty of empty land around my acreage; I guess we’re going to have to learn to farm.”

“Do you know anything about farming?”

“No, but Mary does.”

“Good because Cheryl and I know zip.”

## Goals – Chapter 10

“Most of that grass we planted is already gone, should we turn the pasture into a dry lot?”

“I guess so.”

“I’ll start plowing tomorrow. What do you want, 60 acres?”

“We can start there and adjust as needed.”

We planted 5 acres of oats, 10 acres of corn, 15 acres of soybeans and 30 additional acres of alfalfa. The rancher who agreed to harvest our alfalfa before said he could do the 60 acres, but not for just diesel and some vegetables. He’d need a beef, a couple of hogs and some chickens. Since the compound was fully enclosed, we let the chickens run loose inside. They must be reproducing, there were chicken underfoot everywhere.

We got, on average, about 15” of rain per year, mostly in the summer. There was a belt of grassland in Texas called The Texas Blackland Prairies which are a temperate grassland ecoregion running roughly from the Red River in North Texas to San Antonio in the south. About 99% of it has been converted to cropland.

When we went salvaging, we all went. We took two pickups and Marty and Cheryl’s kids carried their Mini-14 rifles. Marty and Cheryl had never purchased handguns for them, but had found two Browning’s that they put up for Christmas. I had been with him and took the remaining 6 Browning’s. We split the Speer ammo with him taking  $\frac{1}{4}$  of it and me taking  $\frac{3}{4}$  of in proportion to the handguns we took.

Never much cared for the Browning because of the caliber, not the pistol. The M1911 was a Browning design and not that much different from the Hi-Power. There is a story about his designing the Hi-Power. FN commissioned John Browning to design a new military sidearm conforming to this specification. Browning had previously sold the rights to his successful M1911 US Army automatic pistol to Colt's Patent Firearms, and was therefore forced to design an entirely new pistol while working around the M1911 patents. Browning built two different prototypes for the project. One was a simple blow-back design, while the other was operated with a locked-breech recoil system. Both prototypes utilized a new staggered magazine design to increase capacity without unduly increasing the pistol's grip size or magazine length.

The locked breech design was selected for further development and testing. This model was striker-fired, and featured a double-column magazine that held 16 rounds. The design was refined through several trials held by the Versailles Trial Commission.

In 1928, when the patents for the Colt Model 1911 had expired, Dieudonne Saive integrated many of the Colt's previously patented features into the Grand Rendement de-

sign, in the Saive-Browning Model of 1928. This version featured the removable barrel bushing and takedown sequence of the Colt 1911.

By 1931, the Hi-Power design incorporated a shortened 13-round magazine, a curved rear gripstrap, and a barrel bushing that was integral to the slide assembly. By 1934, the Hi-Power design was complete and ready to be produced. It was first adopted by Belgium for military service in 1935 as the Browning P-35. Ultimately, France decided not to adopt the pistol, instead selecting the conceptually similar Mle. 1935.

With FMJ, it was not the best of weapons. And then companies began to produce hollow point ammunition. You couldn't use it in a military arm, but it was fine in civilian owned weapons. These days, you can get Federal HydraShok, Speer Gold Dot and all manner of hollow point ammo. I prefer the Gold Dot, but there was the CorBon Pow'R-Ball aka the flying ash can. Not for a buck a round before the war and then I got used to the Gold Dot because the Lawman and God Dot shot the same and we could practice with the FMJ and load HP for action. A man tends to pick something and stick with it if he can find it in a PAW.

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Marty and I had finished plowing and were almost done disking when Michael came over the radio announcing inbound traffic. It wasn't Mr. Harris Security Team and we beat feet back to the compound locking gates as we entered. It was an old Dodge Crew Cab with six inside and six more in the bed. This time the odds were in our favor. First off, Christmas came early and Michael and Susan were given their pistols, ready to go with 5 thirteen round magazines. Remember, more is better. There were multiple locations on the berm with sandbagged fighting positions about every 10 meters. We didn't have a squad, but we did have the positions and it was easy enough to move back down the berm and change positions as required.

They hadn't yet turned into our road and until they did, we could do nothing. The Dodge Crew Cab stopped at the minefield signs like they were trying to determine if we were bluffing. Mary put in a call to Mr. Harris's comm guy and told him we were soon to be under attack. They told her it could take from 10 to 20 minutes to respond. *Ten minutes hell, this thing will be over in two minutes* (Top Gun).

We took our positions, laid out our extra magazines and waited. Finally, a guy got out of the back of the Crew Cab and started lobbing rocks into the mine field. He was unlucky or we were lucky, he didn't set off any mines. Those M-14 aka toe poppers don't take much to set one off. They dismounted and preceded towards the gate about three abreast.

Kaboom, an M-14 went off and they froze in place. They had also telegraphed their intentions and we opened up. By the time the Security force arrived, there were a dozen dead or wounded BGs and two more M-14s had exploded.

“They work well, don’t they?”

“Yeah, they do, but you said you were out of them.”

“We don’t have any shortage of M-16s, we’ll use those to replace the M-14s.”

“Get that dump truck and we’ll haul off the bodies so you won’t have to bury them. I’d have to say that your security seems to work fine. How come you have enough fighting positions for a full squad?”

“We were told we’d need a squad to protect our perimeter, so we put in 14 and can move around to man them as needed.”

“Smart. What do those kids have, Mini-14s?”

“Considering their size, the rifle is about perfect for them.”

“You may want to move them up to .308s when they’re a little older; sometimes the .223 fails to stop the target.”

“We favor the M1A.”

“So I’ve noticed. I know where you can get more if you’re willing to make the trip.”

“Where?”

“Here, I’ll write it down, but you didn’t hear it from me.”

“Have you had problems over at Mr. Harris’s place?”

“Nothing we didn’t handle. Actually, we never fired a shot, our minefield isn’t marked. It goes against my grain, but Mr. Harris is the boss.”

They lassoed the bodies and drug them out of the minefield. The exploded mines were replaced and we were asked if we need anything. When I mentioned I had a couple of bottles of Wild Turkey, they decided to stay for coffee. Except for the 3 small prongs, the mines were invisible as ever. We took a day off and then continued preparing the seed beds for our crops.

The dealer, who shall remain nameless, had 2 standard models and 6 loaded models. He also had USGI surplus, NIB 20-round magazines. We took all of those plus all the 7.62x51mm ammo and he had a lot, 147gr Federal brand. Michael and Susan got the standard models and Mary and I stored the loaded models in the shelter. We had 200 additional 20-round magazines and 8 more of those 10-round half magazines.

We couldn't find scope mounts or scopes for the 8 rifles, however. That reduced the effective range to around 500 yards (~450 meters). Most of the ammo was late date ammo, 2011. It shot fine in the rifles and only minor sight adjustments were required. I wish we had more riot guns, they're great for close up work; say about 100 yards max and 50 is better. A pistol was, to me, a really close in weapon, 50 feet or less.

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Considering that the mines were being employed against our fellow citizens, I had to agree with that SEAL's comment. It did go against the grain and that's why our minefield was posted. OTOH, people who just came barging in like they owned the place and ignored the signs perhaps deserved what they got. During our latest adventure, we'd taken the scopes off the rifles and just used iron sights, they were that close.

We weren't against trading surplus food we grew to those in need, Christian charity and all that. And, that's not to say that there wasn't a buck or two to be made in the process. Over the Wild Turkey, one of them commented that they were sure getting tired of eating LTS foods. Apparently, Mr. Harris hadn't had a garden planted. I knew he had the seed, I'd seen it. He also had a rototiller, a Troy-Bilt. "Big Red" Horse, the flagship of the Troy-Bilt fleet of rototillers. The "Big Red" is fully equipped for the heaviest-duty jobs in gardens over 2,500 square feet. Perfect for soil preparation and groundbreaking, the "Big Red" tiller has the power and durability to tackle all of your garden challenges. (I looked it up.) Plus he had fertilizer stacked in the garage, a lot of it.

While our field crops grew, we used up a lot of the rancher's stored feed. We took the time to erect some shade for the livestock, just enough to keep the sun off their backs. We soon had two steers ready to be butchered. Unfortunately, we didn't have a clue how to do that. So...we went to Midland and checked around. Clark's & Winford's Meat Company filled the bill. They would butcher 2 steers for a side of beef. They would butcher hogs on the same basis, they get one for every three they butchered and processed for us.

We got the stake bed truck and hauled 4 hogs and 2 steers to the plant. They said it would be 10 days on everything but the bacon and hams. Did we want fresh picnics or smoked picnics? With only 3 hams per family, we opted for smoked picnics. Some baby back ribs would be nice if it wouldn't cut into the chops badly. They would buy any beef or pork we had to sell and could pay in gold. They would pay in silver for chickens.

Thanks, but no thanks, we killed, scalded, plucked and gutted around 100 chickens for our own use. Plus some big old layers that were no longer producing eggs, for baked chicken. Our freezer lacked the room, even for the chickens, so we went shopping. We got 3 of those 25ft<sup>3</sup> chest freezers and we added them to the shelter. We also got three upright freezers, about 21ft<sup>3</sup>, and put one in each home.

How were we doing in a PAW? Not half bad and we'd managed to keep the salvaging to a bare minimum. The largest items were the two homes and all of that fuel. That wasn't



all we had salvaged, but in terms of dollar value, the most significant. The firearms probably came in a close second. Was it just plain theft in a fancy dress and new hair-do? Abandoned is abandoned. We took what we could of the abandoned things and only what we needed. If someone else also found those same abandoned things, their claim was as valid as ours and we'd find another source.

The only thing that bothered Marty and me about our present setup was that, to make room for the third trailer, we'd moved the fuel tankers out back, next to the dry lot and it wasn't as secure as we would have preferred. The other problem was getting the tankers into the compound to refill tanks as needed. We could do it without moving mines, but just barely. One little slip would have created a huge explosion. We'd had to move the fill pipe for the diesel tank so it wasn't under Marty's trailer.

A person doesn't just sit in the field and watch the crops grow so we had free time on our hands. Marty and I went shopping and got new furniture which we used to replace our relatively new furniture which we moved back to our old trailer. We shopped until we dropped but did get 2 more 1,100 propane tanks, one for each new trailer. We filled them and topped of the tank we'd been running on and went for a refill.

Before the war, I'd thought we could get by without salvaging anything. But then, I didn't expect the Texas National Guard to go to Dallas, Austin and Houston and not come back. Our next project would be fencing in our 10 acres, the 60 acres we borrowed plus 10 more to make an eighth section, 80 acres. We found only T posts and barbed wire so it would have to do. We did add a cattle crossing and a gate to the 80. Given sufficient time, we could pull the cattle crossing and be even more secure. The new fence was five strands, barbed wire was plentiful. It wouldn't keep anyone out, but it would keep the livestock in should they get out of the dry lot. The few wooden posts we found allowed us to put in one wooden post for every 5 T posts.

"You've made some changes."

"Yes sir, we surely have. What are you going to start on?"

"Well, the only crop ready to harvest is alfalfa and I'll just drop the bales in the field, you'll have to gather and haul them. I'll tell you what, I'll settle for the fuel and a quarter of beef for this harvest. When I've done the second cutting and harvested the other crops, I'll be having a side plus a quarter of beef, the hogs and chickens and fuel."

It was easier to just give him a market weight steer and two hogs and let him feed them. We would give him some of the chicken we'd already processed. When the final harvest was done, we plowed under the one acre garden and the one acre alfalfa plot for a two acre garden the following year. We decided to wait until planting time to disk and drag. We also took turns on the 60 acres after it was harvested, leaving the perennial alfalfa, but plowing under the other 30 acres.

## Goals – Chapter 11

“I have something to tell you, promise you won’t get mad.”

“What could you tell me that would make me mad?”

“That I’m pregnant.”

“How did that happen?”

“It’s a birds and bees thing.”

“That wasn’t what I meant; I thought you were taking the pill after Rachael was born.”

“I had side effects and stopped taking them. Are you angry?”

“No, just surprised. How about we come up with our own basketball team?”

“I don’t know if I’m up to having 5 babies. Three for sure and maybe four, but we’ll just have to wait and see.”

“Have you picked out any names?”

“How about Cheryl Susan if we have a girl and Matthew Theodore if we have a boy?”

“Just be sure to make them name tags. Theodore Matthew would give us a Junior.”

“Okay, Theodore Matthew.”

If we had a son, his name would be the same as mine, Theodore Matthew Sampson. That’s right, I didn’t tell you my middle name; it’s Matthew. If we did end up with five and the baby was a girl, I believe Mary was favoring Maria. However, despite my comment, we had enough rifles and handguns for up to six kids but were short on riot guns. If we couldn’t find more 590A1s, 590s or 500s we would make do as would the short barreled 870s.

“Want to go shopping for riot guns?”

“Are you bored?”

“Yes, but that’s not why. Mary is expecting a baby. We’re well armed with everything except shotguns.”

“We’ll go back to the store where we got the rifles. He had a bunch in the back room.”

“Why didn’t you get some?”

“We were looking for rifles, not shotguns. However, come to think of it, I’ll need three, myself. I hope we can find enough 00, #4 and slugs.”

“Did you see any?”

“I didn’t look.”

I won’t belabor the point, I got 7 590A1s and Marty got 3 Express combos with Choate 3 round magazine extensions (called 8 round extensions) for 4 shotguns. We ended up with an assortment of buckshot and slugs. However, even as we were shopping, some things began to weigh heavily on my mind. For one thing, when this thing went down, we were sitting around the supper table and a few minutes later were locked in our bomb shelter. What amount of PTDS syndrome could be attributed to that? Had it affected the children more than us, or was it the reverse?

Second, there was that chance comment that they were getting tired of eating LTS food. Did that bode well for us? After all, we’d added a truckload of freezers to hold the additional meat, 3 sides and 3 half hogs. Next year, the yearling cattle would be ready to butcher and the sows had just dropped litters. We even had a new foal and another mare appeared to be ready to foal. Marty and I argued over it, but in the end, I persevered because I was willing to do it by myself. Do what? Rearrange part of the minefield, that’s what. Instead of a crooked path into the compound, we’d have a straight path into the compound and each track would be 2’ wide. Wide enough for our vehicles and larger trucks, but not by much.

I knew they said they took the safety clips for the M-14s with them, but I’d only need one if I moved one mine at a time. Both Marty and I had watched them moving the anti-tank mines and thought we could do it. We talked about PTSD and concluded that all we could do was be there for the kids and try to explain what happened and what it meant. We could lend aid and comfort, but little else. Cheryl and Mary could home school and Marty and I could emphasize their new hobby, the shooting sports.

We moved the M-14s, a near thing, using a homemade safety clip and used a cotter pin to disable the AHD on the M-19s. You had to rotate the top of the M-14 from arm to safe to insert the safety clip. We had to move more than we thought, be it got done, and thank the Good Lord. I think the biggest problem we had was with the soil, it’s mostly clay. Sand would have been better, but God didn’t ask us when he made the planet.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can develop after exposure to one or more terrifying events that threatened or caused grave physical harm. It is a severe and ongoing emotional reaction to an extreme psychological trauma. This stressor may involve someone's actual death, a threat to the patient's or someone else's life, serious physical injury, or threat to physical or psychological integrity, overwhelming psychological defenses. In some cases it can also be from profound psychological and emotional trauma, apart from any actual physical harm. Often, how-

ever, the two are combined. PTSD is a condition distinct from traumatic stress, which has less intensity and duration, and combat stress reaction, which is transitory.

The diagnostic criteria for PTSD is six criteria. Notably, criterion A (the “stressor”) consists of two parts, both of which must apply for a diagnosis of PTSD. The first (A1) requires that “the person experienced, witnessed, or was confronted with an event or events that involved actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.” The second (A2) requires that “the person’s response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror.” The DSM-IV-TR criterion differs substantially from the previous DSM-III-R stressor criterion, which specified the traumatic event should be of a type that would cause “significant symptoms of distress in almost anyone,” and that the event was “outside the range of usual human experience.” Xanax, anyone?

Yeah, I think that WW III would qualify; the kids had to rush to the bomb shelter and spend an inordinate amount of time there until it was safe to leave. After that, it was reinforced by those 12 guys in the Dodge Crew Cab. We kept the truck in case you’re curious. Young people don’t need to see people walking into minefields. For that matter, neither do adults.

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Understand, we had our old trailer. Now if we could just find the right someone to move in there, maybe a military man or woman, who remembered all of their boot camp training on mines and such, we’d be set. Better yet would be a married couple with teenagers that weren’t afraid of a firearm. Do you recall the fella with the ammo on the stripper clips? He traded it off, we learned, because it was extra that he’d put up as trading goods. We learned that he made out well on those trades because he didn’t buy the ammo, he happened on it. That’s what he said. His MOS was Logistics, 88Z and hers was also Logistics, 92Z whatever that means. What I think it means is that they had a license to steal, she’d route it and he’d transport it or something like that. Don’t hold me to that, please. I know the Z stands for E-8 or E-9, senior Noncoms. We went back to Midland to find our man. He was at the Farmer’s Market selling ammo.

“Do you have ammo to sell?”

“You don’t need any; I traded a bunch to you two already.”

“That wasn’t what we meant. I’m Ted and this is Marty. We live in a compound about 10 miles out of Midland. Our security is top notch but we have a problem and thought maybe you could help. Mind answering a few general questions?”

“That depends on the question.”

“Were you in the military?”

“Twenty-four years.”

“Are you a married man?”

“Twenty-two years.”

“She didn’t happen to be in the military off chance?”

“Twenty years.”

“Any children?”

“We have three; two sons and a daughter. Hey what’s this about?”

“It seems that we’re mite short on security. You’d have to see the place to understand, but it is well protected. Our problem is a shortage of personnel. We have four adults and two teens. To properly defend our compound we need a squad sized force. Seven plus four more would give us close to a squad.”

“What’s in it for us?”

“We’re farming a two acre garden next year, 30 acres of alfalfa and another 30 divided up among corn, oats and wheat, Next year we’ll replace one of those crops with beans, wheat or rice, possibly all three. Plus we have a large stock of food and are attempting to grow what we eat and vice versa. Plus we have livestock, both on the hoof and butchered.”

“I’d have to talk it with my wife, Carol, and the boys are old enough to want a say in this too. It might help if we got a tour. Do you have any coffee?”

“We do; actually quite a bit. I wrote down the directions. When you get to the gate, honk the horn and someone will come after you.”

“Smokes?”

“Sorry.”

“No matter; I think I cornered the market. Liquor?”

“Some.”

“That’s okay, we’re not big drinkers. I already hit the liquor stores for the kinds we prefer.”

“Do you have any grenades?”

“That’s illegal.”

“That wasn’t what I asked; do you have any grenades?”

“Might; might not. You’ll have to wait for your answer to that question.”

“When can you and your family make the tour?”

“Stop by tomorrow morning around 10. I tell you then. Do you have any extra gas?”

“Probably as many gallons of gas as you have grenades. On second thought, we’ll pick you up and the fuel will be on us.”

“Blindfolds and all that?”

“It shouldn’t be necessary. You’ll understand once you see the signs we have posted.”

“What do they say?”

“It’s not so much what they say as what they represent, you’ll see. Okay, see you at ten in the morning. Don’t forget to be armed.”

He lifted his shirt and said, “Meet my American Express card; I never leave home without it.”

It was a Smith and Wesson model 29 with a triple pack of speed loaders. He was using .44 magnum HP. We were on time the following morning driving the crew cab, it’s was considered spoils of war. The first thing they noticed was the signs indicating a minefield.

“Are those signs for real?”

“Absolutely; our employer’s security team installed them in the standard pattern for Korea only.”

“Then both you and they have maps of the minefield?”

“Not exactly, we moved a few mines and changed the path into the compound.”

“What about that security team?”

“All Special Forces types. They installed a convoluted path through the minefield and it was damned inconvenient. So, I sucked it up a short time back and rearranged the entrance path. Your housing is this trailer up at the front. It’s a bit smaller than ours but the furniture is new and we added a new upright freezer.”

## Goals – Chapter 12

“Well...it is clean and well taken care of. You seem to have everything, power, water, propane and septic, right?”

“You’re mostly right; we only have a pair of 12.5kw Quiet Diesel generators. They put out a hair over 100amps each. We started with one and added a second we picked up in Odessa.”

“Then you’ll need one more?”

“We should be able to get one in Amarillo or El Paso. Amarillo is closer by about 100 miles. Plus there is another dealer in San Antonio, which is about the same distance as El Paso.”

“Why don’t I hear them running?”

“I’ll show you when you decide to move here.”

“Let me have a word with Carol. The trailer is a mite small for us; we shall see what she says.”

“And?”

“She said we could put the kids in the large bedroom with bunk beds and we could take the smaller bedroom. She’s leaning towards saying yes.”

“Why doesn’t the rest of your family get acquainted with our wives and children and I’ll show you where the generators are.”

Most men who defer to their wives generally follow her instincts. It was a risk, but a minor one, considering...

“Blast doors?”

“Entrance hatch; follow me.”

“I can hear the generator now, but they’re damned quiet.”

“Behold their secret location.”

“A bomb shelter?”

“WW III is over; call it a large storm shelter. Want a tour?”

“Sure.”

We spent a few minutes while he looked the shelter over in a quick but close inspection.

“Not bad; not half bad at all. Who built it for you?”

“Marty and I were in construction; we built it by ourselves. The radios were moved up to my mobile home.”

“Son, you’re a survivalist.”

“I guess we are, but the term has negative connotations and most of us call ourselves preppers.”

“Whatever you call yourselves, you done good.”

“How did you and your family get through the radiation?”

“Basement shelter; crowded but it worked.”

“How about a cup of that coffee you were promised?”

“Show me the way.”

They had their coffee and stayed for lunch. It was nothing special, hurry up chili. The recipe calls for several cans of pre-seasoned chili beans, kidney beans, ground beef, onions and chili powder. His name was CSM Robert ‘Bob’ Howe and was just enough older than Marty to be an older brother, just as Marty was an older brother to me.

“You know, I looked and there’d be room for a larger trailer where yours is sitting. I know where I can get one, is there any way to swap it out with the smaller one?”

“It can be done; we have a straight path through the minefield that nobody knows about. They used something called a Korea only standard pattern minefield. I changed that a while back.”

“You move a minefield by yourself?”

“Well, yeah.”

“You have some big ones, does it hurt to walk?”

“We had a map and I was very patient.”

“Regardless, that’s EOD work and they’re experts. The Army prefers to just use the MICLIC in most cases. One question, what’s your food situation?”



“You saw the freezers and boxes of food in the shelter? The freezers are nearly full and we’re well stocked on Walton Feed one year deluxe food packages. Plus we’ve canned a lot from our garden.”

“What about life’s essentials?”

“No smokes and limited liquor, but good or better on everything else.”

“Carol?”

“Yes. Definitely yes.”

“Kids?”

“They have horses,” they chorused.

“Now I have a question,” I asked.

“Shoot.”

“How are you fixed on guns and ammo?”

“This is Texas isn’t it? We have quite an assortment, M16A3s, M9s, semi auto M14s, M1911s, Benelli M4 Super 90 aka M1014 shotguns, bayonets, Interceptor, MOLLE and enough ammo for all to fight WW IV. But you wanted to know about grenades, right? We have a 150 of the M61s that are now obsolete plus 300 of M67s, which aren’t obsolete. Plus the last of the LAW rockets we could get our hands on, five crates. Will that do?”

“In a pinch,” I replied laughing. It seems they had 5 of every small arm he mentioned, one for each member of their family. It had taken half of their careers to build the collection. It was just stuff that fell through the cracks. Very carefully constructed cracks I mused, the military is downright anal retentive when it comes to things with serial numbers or that go boom.

Over the course of several days, we located another Quiet Diesel 12.5kw, more generator supplies including engine rebuild kits, spare filters and oil. While their boys emptied the furnishings out of our old trailer, we located and towed their new three bedroom trailer back to the compound. We disconnected the semi, went into the compound, replaced the wheels and tow hitch and carefully towed the old trailer out. We parked it parallel to the road just past the minefield marking the entrance to the new path through the minefield.

We oh so carefully, towed the new trailer in and squeaked it into to place. It was an exceedingly tight fit, but it did fit. After we leveled it and connected the utilities, we attached the electrical wiring to another new 200amp ATS and fired up their generator. It

was well after dark when we finished. The only new furnishings he picked up were 1 bunk bed with 2 dressers and 1 twin bed with a dresser.

The next morning we took the stake bed truck and picked up their guns, ammo, ordnance and clothing. They didn't have as much as a pickup load of food, counting everything including spices, pots, pans and serving dishes. He did have a few cases of MREs. Most of the truck was filled with munitions. With a total of eleven people, we now could post one every 11 meters along the berm, almost perfect. Even better was the fact that we could field all .30 caliber rifles and some automatic weapons.

"I don't suppose we could come up with Interceptor for the rest of us?"

"How many sets and what sizes?"

"There are just the four of us adults plus the kids."

"Gonna have to sing for my supper?"

"Not at all. I just thought if you knew someplace..."

"I was kidding. We'll tape everyone and then you and I will take a road trip Ted. I think I may have a pair of old BDUs that might fit you. You can take one of our A3s and an M-9 because the uniform has Staff Sergeant Stripes."

"Where are we going?"

"A military base where I have or had friends. What do you know about the M2E50 aka M2E2 aka M2A1 machine gun?"

"Never heard of it."

"It's a long overdue upgrade to the M2HB, Browning Heavy Machinegun. It has a Quick Change Barrel (QCB) capability, a rail accessory mount, an improved flash hider and a manual safety."

"So?"

"Why do you think I insisted on driving this stake bed truck?"

"You don't mean that..."

"The policy is don't ask, don't tell. You damned right, if I can. I might even try for more grenades and possibly some demolition kits. Anything else you want?"

"M18A1 Claymore mines?"

“I can try.”

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Bob’s old friend had been scheduled to retire but ended up getting extended for the duration. He wasn’t particularly happy with the Army. We left with close to a truckload and most of it was .50BMG ammo. We also had 18 sets of Interceptor, another 150 of M67s, two M2E2 (M2A1) machine guns with tripods and spare barrels plus 25 M183 demolition kits, the M18A1 Claymores and gas masks with spare CBRN filters, an assortment of gas grenades, British CR, US CS and obsolete CN, incendiary and smoke.

The charge assembly M183 consists of 16 block demolition charges M112, four priming assemblies and carrying case M85. Each Priming assembly consists of a five-foot length of detonating cord assembled with two detonating cord clips and capped at each end with a booster. The components of the assembly are issued in the carrying case. The demolition charge M112 is a rectangular block of Composition C-4 approximately 2 inches by 1.5 inches and 11 inches long, weighing 1.25 Lbs. When the charge is detonated, the explosive is converted into compressed gas. The gas exerts pressure in the form of a shock wave, which demolishes the target by cutting, breaching, or cratering.

“What in the name of God do you have on that truck?”

“Stuff.”

“Well, obviously. What kind of stuff?”

“Military kind of stuff, Claymore mines, plastic explosive, 2 machine guns, ammo, gas masks, filters, more hand grenades and a couple of tons of ammo.”

“Anything else?”

“Two observation scopes, ATM 80 HD.”

“For the range?”

“For watching the road, but I suppose we could use them on the range.”

“What brand?”

“Swarovski.”

“The Cadillac?”

## Goals – Chapter 13

“Big boy toys.”

“Why don’t we make CR?”

“According to Bob, it’s persistent and about 10 times more lethal than CS. The US banned its use. What we got came from the personal collection Bob’s friend had.”

Upon closer examination, Bob’s rifles all had Advanced Armament suppressors. He also had a Ruger Mk II with integral suppressor and a bolt action McMillan Tac-50.

Maybe we should overthrow the government...nah, we’d just end up dead and the government was far larger than we were. And then, we got a radio call from Mr. Harris’s compound asking if we could stop by for a visit.

“New man?”

“Meet CSM Bob Howe, he and his family moved to our compound.”

“Bob, nice to meet you.”

“Mr. Harris.”

“I’m not going to beat around the bush guys; we’re looking for some food. My guys are getting tired of the LTS stuff and they want real food.”

“You can’t be out of meat yet, surely? We’re going to increase the size of our garden next year to about double. Why didn’t you plant a garden, I know you have seeds, fertilizer and a Big Red?”

“They went through the meat and Mountain House meals faster than I anticipated. I guess I’d have to hire someone to do a garden next year. We’ve been eating a lot of beans and rice and they only go so far.”

“You know you could erect a greenhouse and grow fresh vegetables. You could have those in a matter of weeks. We’ll have a few hogs available soon, but no beef for a while. We only had one extra and it went to the guy who harvested our crops. There have to be a lot of cattle out there and you can get them butchered at Clark’s & Winford’s Meat Company.”

“I see. It was just a thought, thanks for coming by.”

“I don’t trust that guy,” Bob noted on the way home.

“Neither do I but I can’t speak for Marty. His reaction wasn’t what one might expect, so calm and unconcerned.”

“I have a bad feeling about this,” Marty added.

“Ted, when we get back, why don’t Marty and you go over your security with me.”

“Be glad to, though there’s not much to it. The 80 has a barbed wire fence and a cattle guard at the entrance. We have the minefield and it’s well marked. Then there’s the fence and the berm. That’s pretty much it except for the weapons and we don’t have anything you don’t have.”

“The first thing we need to do is take down those signs. We should set up the M2A1s, too and a little practice with those wouldn’t hurt. Marty, if we drop you off, would you gather the signs?”

“No sweat.”

I can only assume that Bob realized that the security people had used the signs as benchmarks from which to compute the mines location. We’d observed that when they cleared the field for our trailers. Bob said he spent his first 4 years in the infantry and cross trained to logistics which offered him the best chance for advancement at the time. He’d met Carol and they had gotten married. Since they were in different specialties, transportation for him and quartermaster for her, there had never been a conflict. Except for the few times one of them had been transferred, and the other had to put in for a transfer to reunite the family.

The higher they rose in rank, the harder it had become. They had spent their last eight years posted to the same location. He also explained that around the time he made Sergeant First Class, a misdirected shipment had ended up in his lap. And, he still had those grenades, the M61s. While he had been in combat theatres, he’d never actually been in combat. The same went for Carol at different times and they both had the Combat Action Badge. His five rows of ribbons related to his being in those combat theatres and he had no actual combat awards for Valor.

“You have plenty of dirt; do you have sandbags we can use to build defensive positions?”

“I wouldn’t know where to look.”

“Try Fire Stations or an Emergency Services office.”

“How many will we need?”

“All you can get. We’ll need 600 minimum and more if all you can find is burlap because they don’t last.”

The bags we did find were some kind of braided plastic. Circular woven polypropylene, Bob called it. We had his two boys, Michael plus the three of us filling sandbags. Even so, it took about a week. Not only did we build sandbagged emplacements for the .50 calibers, we improved those for our riflemen. I sort felt like building the latter would be akin to waving a flag and saying, "Here I am, shoot at me."

Twenty-four inches of sandbags will stop most bullets. However, it takes about five feet of sandbags to stop a RPG. The article I read on sandbags referred me to another topic, Hesco Bastions. That's where I got the information on the thickness required to stop this and that. However, it didn't mention .50 caliber bullets or 40mm grenades. I could take the grenades to be the same as an RPG, five feet, but what about those .50 caliber rifles?

The real downside to this was knowing as much as we did about this potential enemy. They were all special operators with the extra training and equipped with some of the best equipment money could buy. All English speaking, but not all American. I guess my point is that we couldn't ignore them; they could come at any time, probably around oh-dark-thirty. As far as the meat went, we had two yearlings and the cows had been bred again, so we'd likely have two more we could butcher in a year. That's not the way to increase our herd however, we needed heifers that we could hold onto and breed.

As we filled and placed the sandbags, we were creating a path about 6' below the top of the berm, on the inside, not outside. We came to realize that the path should be permanent and go all the way around the berm and we needed a bridge for where the gate was. A trip to Midland produced two I beams of sufficient length to gap the two sides of the gap. Bob had a welder in his truck; I thought that only happened in Patriot Fiction or PAW stories. The I beams were welded in place on the plates 8' up or 6' down, take your pick, and two layers of ¾" plywood screwed on using metal screws and drilled holes. Bob asked what Mr. Harris had in his armory and Marty and I laid it out for him. He was interested in the Barrett rifles and the Bushmaster II.

"In December 2006 Alliant Techsystems received a contract from the US Crane Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane, Indiana, to provide 30mm air bursting ammunition for the US Marine's Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle. Under terms of the contract, ATK provided 1,200 rounds to the US Navy for qualification tests. The contract contained three production options for deliveries of 30mm air bursting ammunition. This was the first ever production contract for air bursting ammunition and highlights ATK's role as a gun-system provider of choice. Key components of the system included ATK's Mk44 Chain Gun, a gun control unit with an inductive fuze setter; a fire control system and the 30mm x 173mm Air Bursting Munition. Milliseconds before the round is chambered, the sophisticated fuze is programmed to explode at the precise range selected by the gunner – who uses an advanced laser range finder to determine the distance. Once the round exits the gun, the ATK-designed fuze technology computes the projectile's revolutions and velocity to determine the exact moment of detonation. In case you're wondering fellas, that's the Bushmaster II."

“How far will it shoot?”

“Miles.”

“Is there any defense?”

“Sure, but I’d rather be on the side who had the gun.”

“What should we do?”

“We’re going to have to cover the fighting positions with plenty of sand bags. If you don’t have enough, I suggest we go get them. We’ll need beams to support them, too.”

There were 11 fighting positions and we had 11 people to man them including Marty’s kids. Were we lucky, or had we made our own luck? You don’t know until you ask and if you have something to offer, it may come out the way you want it to; or, maybe not. After we got to the lumberyard, we concluded that they didn’t have enough 4x6s to make a solid top of 4x6s to support the top, so we could use 5 and two layers of ¾” plywood on top and then mound the sandbags until we ran out.

Even if they didn’t attack using the Bushmaster II, they had a pair of the Barrett’s and could attack from a mile away. That Canadian killed a guy in Afghanistan at 1.5 miles using the same rifle Bob owned. A bolt action rifle, all other things being equal, is inherently more accurate than a semi-auto. We could put out a bunch .50 caliber and .30 caliber fire and switch to the A3s if push came to shove. Most of Bob’s .50 caliber rifle ammo was Hornady A-MAX 750gr match.

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It was all we could do, except to implement a guard force, more to sound the alarm if that oh-dark-thirty thing happened. We set it up with four hour shifts and used all 11 of us who were considered adults. Not that they were, five of the eleven were teens. Plus we didn’t have night vision because the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation scopes had been too expensive. Did I say that we were lucky to have Bob? He had a MUNS that he used on his .50 caliber rifle. The 3<sup>rd</sup> generation MUNS is far better than the Raptor. McMillan offered the McCann night vision rail specifically for mounting the MUNS (Magnum Universal Night Sight circa 11 grand).

They didn’t though, not for a while. I think maybe they realized that Mr. Harris’s approach had put us on a heightened state of readiness. The bottom line was we lost a lot of sleep waiting and watching. The old principle that it’s not if, just when and what kept us alert while they were snug is the great big shelter. Since we didn’t contact Harris after that, for all we knew they took our suggestion and bought some cattle and had them butchered and processed to refill the huge Marvel Commercial freezers.

The garden was in and we had more salad makings than we needed so we took a care package to Harris. It included enough lettuce, green onions, radishes, some small carrots etc. for a few days. We also took them 4 hogs and 24 live chickens. The cook was most appreciative. Harris was nowhere to be seen. The cook said they were out looking for cattle to rebuild the supply of beef. It wasn't a lot, but the garden had only just started to produce.

Since this year's garden was double the size of the previous years, it appeared that we could supply them with a fair amount of fresh produce. As I said, except for the cook, nobody thought to thank us for the donation. We planted those last ten acres in alfalfa using a different strain of seed, increasing our hay crop to 40 acres and hoping for 3 cuttings. Last year's crops had been 5 acres of oats, 10 acres of corn, 15 acres of soybeans and 30 additional acres of alfalfa. This year we cut back the soybean production to 5 acres and planted 5 acres of pinto beans plus a 5 acre rice patty and replaced the oat field with hard white wheat.

Keep in mind; we were still amateurs at this farming thing. The clay in the soil held the rice patty water effectively, limiting the additional water required. We could bring up our beans, rice, rolled oats and cornmeal to the original level and more and still have some to sell or trade. Once we had the harvest completed we had two hogs, 2 dozen chickens and 100-gallons of diesel, Mary contacted the Harris camp explaining what was available and our take on its value. We allowed we'd be willing to sell it by the bushel or by the 100 weight because grain is usually sold by the hundredweight.



## Goals – Chapter 13

Since we didn't have cattle, Harris was less than enthusiastic. I suppose because we had beans and rice to sell, only two hogs and 2 dozen chickens. They had beef, he said, found them wondering around looking for a good home. Do they still kill cattle thieves? I ask because he claimed he'd bought it from a rancher. He even had a crude bill of sale. He agreed to take our extra and we began talking price. He must have gotten to be a millionaire by buying cheap and selling high. His offer was less than half of what we valued our crops at. We had said, "I'm sorry Mr. Harris there's no way we could let it go for that. We can get double what we think is the fair value at the Farmer's Market."

"Now see here, if it weren't for me, where would you be? In some half-finished shelter trying to figure out where your next meal was coming from."

"We don't see it that way, it's a seller's market and our prices are fair. If you change your mind, we'd like payment in gold or silver. Another thing; why didn't you put in the garden?"

"I didn't have anyone who knew how."

"Meet our price and we can help out there. We can turn a garden plot and prepare the seed bed. We can advise you on harvest and preservation. And, all the things you should be doing yourself or have that security force doing for you. It may not be all you want because we now have three families to feed, but it should tide you over until you can bring in a garden. What did you do about my greenhouse suggestion?"

"We've looked into it and didn't find any."

"Did you try Texas Greenhouse Company in Fort Worth? They have sizes ranging from hobby greenhouses to very large non-commercial greenhouses."

"We'll look into it."

"Don't think we don't appreciate what you've done for us, we do. We also have families and they're our primary concern. We'll help to the limit of our abilities and that's as far as we can go. It's going to be about two years before we can supply you with large amounts of beef and chicken. Your security force must be eating you out of house and home. Do you need that large of a force?"

"I'm fairly sure I do. If they're not talking about jack booted thugs, they're talking about mutant zombie bikers, whatever the hell that is, or raids by locals who know about the shelter and may just attack for the available food and fuel."

"I can understand that, we have similar concerns to some degree. We've spent considerable time upgrading our defenses. Plus we'll be farming 70 acres next year, not including our garden."

"What changes did you make to your security?"

"A little of this, a little of that plus we acquired some heavy machineguns."

"Oh really? Where did you find them?"

"A friend of a friend."

"Could you get us some?"

"Gee, you know, I really doubt that, we called in all of our guy's markers."

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Fans of Laugh In might recall Artie Johnson saying, "Very interesting...but stupid!" Are you old enough to remember the show? It first came to my attention when Dick Martin died in 2008; I'd never seen the show. I read about it on Wiki and followed a link to Artie Johnson, hence the quote. In an indirect way, it would apply to any forthcoming battle with Harris's security force aka goon squad. With preparations we made, Bob suggested that the odds might be in our favor, especially since we relocated the minefield leading to the gate into the compound and had taken down the signs.

We three had been closed lip with Harris; loose lips sink ships and all that. Six of his men had already been inside the compound and knew where things were located. But, it wouldn't do them any good unless they could get inside. I also rather doubted, upon reflection, they would try to move the 30mm gun since it was in a semi-permanent mount. Good planning allows for the worst and then you hope for the best. Should we be attacked, it would be a set piece battle on a smaller scale. With 3:1 odds, we had the defenders edge. OTOH, some general once said, "Fixed fortifications are monuments to man's stupidity."

Texas Greenhouse Company? Fort Worth was only about 300 miles, at best a long day trip and at worst an overnight trip. Plus, we had the semi and the lowboy. A greenhouse would be a nice addition, and like I told Harris, we could have vegetables in weeks. About the only place to set it up would be by the dry lot behind the compound. By placing it there, it should be protected against most stray bullets.

We'd have to hurry, another winter was coming on. Off we went, hoping against hope that they might have one in stock. Once we finally located the business, we determined that they had two basic models, the American Classic and the American Hobby. Pictures in the office showed previous installations, the largest of which was a Classic, 30' wide by 90' long with polycarbonate panels. Further searching revealed its twin, disas-

sembled and ready to ship to the customer. Some poor guy was out his greenhouse and we'd be eating lettuce all year. It included accessories like soil heating cable, a misting system and two 60' watering/misting hoses.

We used their forklift to load it and headed home. We'd have a winter project to keep us busy. Mary was very busy with Cheryl Susan, 7 pounds 2 ounces, 19½" and growing like a weed. Our three were named Robert, Rachael and Cheryl; but, still no Theodore Matthew, Jr. If there was any good news about going to the hospital it was that they had the vaccines and could vaccinate our kids. In fact, everyone was vaccinated because the vaccines provide usually only lasts about ten years and they had fresh supplies from the National Strategic Stockpile. About the only vaccine they didn't have was flu vaccine. We may not have had this large of a family, but we didn't have TV and the movies got old about the third time through.

The hospital had vaccination schedules for children, teens and adults. Mary said she'd never been vaccinated since she'd gotten out of school and I admitted that neither had I. Bob's family was current on all of their vaccinations; including some that most civilians never get unless they travel, like Yellow Fever. There was even a vaccine for TB but it was only effective in children, for the most part. By my thinking, the most important vaccine we got was the tetanus vaccine.

Life wasn't totally abnormal, for a PAW. We kept a guard and worked a lot with our hands. That's why the tetanus vaccine was so important, one little cut and boom, you have lockjaw and you die. For best results, vaccinate at 5 year intervals. Better yet, wear leather gloves when working around anything that may have sharp edges. Use your common sense, if you have any. If you did get a cut, you attended to it immediately by cleaning it, adding an antibiotic like Neosporin Cream and bandaged it to stop the bleeding. Cream as opposed to Ointment lets the wound breath.

It took longer than we thought to erect the green house despite having 6 pairs of hands. We buried the soil heating cable which was intended to keep the soil at 74°. We ran a water line but when it came to electricity, we didn't have any spare power. Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more (Henry V, Act III). We probably should have gotten a large generator to begin with. This time we did, and came home with a monster weighing about a ton or more, a Cummins DGDK, rated at 113kw and 521 amps. The extended stack (full single phase output) and 4 lead alternators can supply single phase output up to full set rated 3-phase kW at 1.0 power factor

The new generator wouldn't be mounted in the shelter. Instead, we got 3 of the 200amp ATS and mounted them to the homes. The new generator went on the line side and the shelter generators on the generator side. We could still get by with the 0 cable because none of the home's panels were rated over 100amps. When we finally finished and had the electric heat installed along with the water, our wives began planting in trays. Meanwhile, we had two more tasks to complete before the greenhouse could be classified as finished; we needed tables to set the plants on because of the in ground wiring, and we needed some kind of grow lights for when the sun didn't give out much energy.

We went with the easiest project, the tables, building them out of ¾" plywood sawn in half lengthwise and supported by 2x4s. It didn't really take that much plywood, about 28 sheets. Next we went looking for fluorescent fixtures and warm and cool white bulbs. That came from a fiction story by Tired Old Man. We installed 7 rows of 22 fixtures each with each row on a separate switch. The total load was around 15kw according to my math. It took 154 of each kind of light.

We wondered if Mr. Harris took our advice to get a greenhouse. Probably not; if he had, he most certainly would have taken the one we hauled back. On the other hand, he may have gone for a larger, commercial greenhouse. In a PAW, that might be easier said than done. Depending upon the brand, some large greenhouses were relatively inexpensive.

The attack came just as the sun poked its head above the horizon; a dull crack in the distance and a mine exploding. In no time at all, ten mines had exploded, clearing a path through the minefield or at least beginning to. A few rounds struck the areas we had removed mines from with no exploding, but the shooter quickly changed his point of aim. We didn't need an alarm; the mine detonation shook everyone awake. We grabbed our vests, LBE, extra magazines and headed for our assigned place on the wall.

It continued throughout the morning. Not every shot detonated a mine, but enough did to nearly eliminate the minefield as viable layer of protection. The shots came so rapidly at times, we suspected they were using both of the Barrett rifles. The accuracy of the shooters was uncanny. However, they only worked on the east side of the compound rather than all around the compound.

"There's nothing like telegraphing your next move. That will get you killed. We'd best move both the M2A1s to the eastern side. Ain't no body armor had that will stop a .50 caliber round. Mind if I take one and Carol the other? We familiar with the M2HB."

"I thought .50 caliber machineguns were crew served."

"They are, the other crew members carry the tripod and ammo. Only one person actually fires the gun."

"How much ammo will you need?"

"Let's start off with ten cans apiece. My boys can get more if we need it."

Therein lay one advantage to fixed fortifications, the availability of more ammo. OTOH, the machineguns gave them a specific aimpoint for the Bushmaster II if they brought it, their 40mm rifle grenades and their rockets. Still, the grenades and rockets had limited range...

Around noon the firing stopped. There were at least three clear paths through the minefield. We stayed at the fighting positions, waiting for the firing to resume. We were also short one person on the berm, Bob and Carol's daughter was stuck with babysitting. Jeanie was their youngest, just 13 years old. Their boys were Robert, Jr. and Kevin.

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Time out – this is getting complicated, do you know the players?

Theodore 'Ted' Matthew Sampson, his wife Mary and their three kids, Robert, Rachael and Cheryl.

'Marty' Harrelson, his wife Cheryl and their children, Michael and Susan.

Robert 'Bob' Howe, his wife Carol and their children, Robert Jr., Kevin and Jeanie.

Our enemy: Mr. Harris, the owner of the company we used to work for and built a bomb shelter for; plus his relatives and a security force of 36 men, all ex-special forces of one kind or another. They nearly had us outgunned, except for the .50 caliber M2A1 machineguns. But, they also had a 30mm cannon.

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Mary left her position to get a case of MREs and Cheryl went with her to get and pass out sun brewed iced tea. Once we were fed, they went after water so we could refill our canteens. Life had stopped for the moment as far as we were concerned, but that didn't make our chores go away. The cows were mooing because it was past time to milk them. Marty and I reluctantly dismounted the berm and tended to the livestock. The cows needed milking and all of the animals needed fed. The water tanks had float valves so they weren't thirsty.

There's more to watering animals than a simple stock tank with a float valve. Hogs are creatures unto themselves and require a separate watering system because they're lower to the ground, I guess. We had two sow cups mounted, one near ground level for the piglets and one higher for the sows and larger pigs. To castrate the pigs and cattle, we used the rubber band system because it was all we had and could figure out how to use. A Vet showed us how to do it and agreed to geld our colts.

I have to assume that most farmers were raised on farms and learned the various tasks as they grew up. Then, when they graduated high school or college, they returned to the farm, bringing their experience and knowledge with them. We didn't have that luxury; we learned farming the hard way, one mistake at a time.

Except for Bob and Carol, we were learning military tactics the same way, one mistake at a time. There was a clear difference; these mistakes could get you killed. For this

reason, if no other, Bob did his best to school us in the military way of doing things. His first lesson was concerning three lights on a match, although only he and Carol smoked.

## Goals – Chapter 14

The lesson could be used to teach light discipline. It stemmed, he said from WW I when three soldiers would use one match to light three cigarettes. An enemy sniper, seeing the match, would frequently manage to shoot the third cigarette smoker. Just because it was an old lesson didn't mean that it wasn't valid.

Bob didn't have to do any shooting training because we'd done that for ourselves. And, although the ten acres belonged to Mary and me, and Marty had an interest in the shelter, we put Bob in charge because of his 4 years of Infantry experience. I know, I know, that was a long time ago, but it was more current that what we had which was nada, zip, none.

Even with those 20-60 power spotting scopes, we couldn't see the shooters. However, that was looking into the sun and later, when the sun was above us, the shooting had stopped and perhaps there was no one to see. We doubled the guard and had the others stand down. We weren't certain what their plan was; open holes in the minefield or just keep us in a state of unrest. Maybe, both. Plus, attacking from the east put the sun directly in our faces during the early morning hours. Those spotting scopes are expensive. Over \$2,500 MSRP for the two we had without the eyepieces, which were another \$500 plus. A person could buy a pretty good generator for that amount of money.

Some of their shots actually detonated more than one M-14 mine and I mentioned to Bob that they had a large supply of the Mk-211MP ammo. He explained that if the mines were in the Korea only pattern, it was possible that one mine detonation might cause several mines to explode. It was, he said, strictly a function of how closely the mines were located to each other. Since they had employed a Korea only standard pattern minefield and it was no bigger than it was, they had probably condensed the minefield, which could result in multiple mines being detonated at a single time. (FM 20-32 Chapter 7)

The following day, we arose early to man the fighting positions. However, nobody was shooting at us this morning. Marty and I took care of the livestock and did our thing to turn the milk into cheese. We had lunch and about 1pm, there was a dull crack in the distance and a mine exploded. These Special Forces people were good, they weren't setting a pattern. Bob and Carol opened up with M2A1s, laying down some fire about 2,000 yards out and working their way in. The firing slowed by about half, did they get one of the snipers? Or, did one of them stop firing just to make us think we did?

That evening, those of us not on watch put *The Right Stuff* on to watch. The opening sequence of the film shows Chuck Yeager breaking the sound barrier followed by a plane crash.

“Okay, what model of plane was that and who was flying it?”

The thing was, the shot was so brief, it was hard to tell. Bob had the answer, the plane was an F-104 Starfighter flown by Captain Iven Carl "Kinch" Kincheloe, Jr. Did that undertaker look familiar? Royal Dano who frequently played roles of these types. When they recovered Mercury 4 in 1999, there was no evidence supporting Grissom blowing the hatch.

"In 1961, Grissom was pilot of Mercury-Redstone 4, popularly known as Liberty Bell 7, the second American (suborbital) spaceflight. After splashdown explosive bolts blew the hatch off unexpectedly and water flooded into the tiny capsule. Grissom exited through the open hatch and into the ocean but nearly drowned as water filled his flight suit while a helicopter tried to lift and recover the spacecraft. However, the capsule had become too heavy with water and sank. Grissom strongly asserted he had done nothing to blow the hatch and NASA officials eventually agreed with him. Initiating the explosive egress system required hitting a metal trigger with the side of a closed fist. This was later shown to leave a big bruise but Grissom did not have one. The capsule was recovered in 1999 but no evidence was found which could explain how the hatch opened on its own. Years after, Guenter Wendt (who was pad leader for the early American manned space launches) wrote he believed a small cover over the external release actuator was accidentally lost sometime during the flight or splashdown and the T-handle may have been tugged by a stray parachute shroud line, or was perhaps damaged by the heat of re-entry, cooled upon splashdown, contracted and then fired.

A very long movie, that one. The plane Yeager flew, the F-104, wasn't the right model, at least in the hangar shot. His had a rocket mounted in the vertical stabilizer and was the Lockheed NF-104A hybrid rocket and jet. He began his bailout sequence at 56,000', but was unable to complete it until the plane was at 22,000'. It kept us up well past our bedtime so when we started receiving fire again, it didn't take long to man the berm. It was just more of the same, except they set off far fewer mines in the dark. Once we stood down, one more time, we held a 'war council'.

"How long are they going to keep this up?"

"Until it stops working; then, they'll switch to a different tactic. The whole idea, people, is to keep us off balance. We're relatively secure inside the berm, despite them destroying a portion of that minefield. I believe that they only did that to make it easier for them, but if they have the map as you've said, they could still make entry, if they wanted to. We need to post one guard over the dry lot area so they don't sneak in and get your livestock."

"Our livestock, we're all in this together. Do you think maybe you actually hit one of them with the .50 caliber?"

"There's only one way to find out, does anyone want to join me in an expedition?"

"What for?"



“Looking for blood sign.”

“Wouldn’t they have cleaned it up?”

“It’s possible, what I wouldn’t give for some Luminol. The Chemiluminescence reaction is revealed in black light. It must be activated with an oxidant, usually Hydrogen peroxide. The glow doesn’t last that long, about 30 seconds, and it can react in the presence in certain other compounds. Luminol chemiluminescence can also be triggered by copper or an alloy of copper, horseradish, and certain bleaches; and, as a result, if a crime scene is thoroughly cleaned with a bleach solution, residual bleach will cause the entire crime scene to produce the typical blue glow, effectively camouflaging any organic evidence, such as blood.”

“Where would we get it?”

“Any good forensic lab should have it; police departments and/or County Sheriff’s offices.”

“Where did you learn this stuff?”

“Oh, I chanced upon it at How Stuff Works.”

“Could we make our own?”

“Sure, if we had the basic chemicals and knew what we were doing. Absent that, a cop station would be our best bet. Otherwise, don’t ask me, I was more interested in how the stuff works.”

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Could we get off the acreage long enough to go to Midland and find some Luminol? We had the hydrogen peroxide for cleaning out wounds. There was only one way to find out, try it. The Midland Police Department had it, even if most of the officers weren’t around. The problem wasn’t EMP; it was a shortage of gasoline. On the way back, Marty dropped Bob and I off and we began to look for sign. Around 1,500 yards out, we saw scuffed marks on the soil. Looking further, we found a spot that appeared to have soil moved and heaped slightly. There wasn’t any brass around so if they shot from here, they policed their brass.

We scraped into the soil pile slowly, taking off about 1/8” of soil at a time. When we came to a clump, Bob applied the Luminol. It was daylight and we couldn’t tell. We put a large portion in a paper bag and continued looking, finding nothing. When we returned to the compound, we took another portion of the sample that we hadn’t applied Luminol to, sprayed it and applied black light. It glowed with an obvious blue light. If it wasn’t blood, it had to be one of the other possibilities, but we assumed it was blood. If so, it was 1 down and 35 to go.

What next, the Bushmaster II? All things considered, that still seemed to be a very remote possibility. By now, Harris must have gotten some beef and probably some pork. We'd offered to sell him food at a fair value and he'd declined. I was beginning to get angry, again. We needed a new plan of action and I suggested that we give them a dose of their own medicine. We could take Marty and me, Bob and his oldest son, Robert Jr. and use our two rifles and spotting scopes. And try to pick off a few of his security team. My Barrett had the BORS, which compensated for everything except the cross wind. Bob's TAC-50 was even more accurate than the Barrett.

We loaded the magazines with Mk211MP and I adjusted my BORS for that ammo. We agreed that Bob would estimate the windage because I hadn't had much luck doing that. The range of their cannon was our major concern because its range was far greater than a .50 caliber rifle. We would attack the other compound at sunup, from the east using their tactics against them. Just enough shots, mind you, to get their attention and teach them that they were not immune to someone using their very tactics against them.

We left about 3:30am and were in place by 4am. The pickup was parked further back in a small arroyo, placing it out of sight. As the sun poked its head above the horizon, we began firing. Bob got one of them with his first shot and he gave me a windage adjustment. I clicked it in and found a target. He was standing facing me, his hand shading his eyes. What he should have been doing...too late now, I got him with my first shot; 3 down and 33 to go. Everyone managed to take one of them before it became time to boogie. We returned to the pickup and moved slowly down the arroyo and turned left, away from the compound. At the first cross road we turned again and continued to do that until we were able to return home with the tally 5 down and 31 to go.

They wouldn't repeat that mistake so what were we going to do next? As it turned out, nothing; so far, in no small matter thanks to the berm, we hadn't had any casualties let alone any fatalities. Our attack had unexpected benefits because it was a week before we were attacked again. However, they'd managed to bring in the big gun, the 30mm. It had, I learned, an effective range of 2,000 meters and a maximum range of 3,000 meters. They had 3 kinds of ammo, HE, AP and Air Bursting. It could reach its maximum effective range in about  $1\frac{1}{3}$  seconds and had a rate of fire of about 250 rounds per minute.

Only .50 caliber fire could reach that far and we'd be extremely lucky to hit anyone at that range because they probably weren't standing there waving their hands saying, "Here I am, hit me." Nonetheless, we had nothing to lose and everything to gain so we returned fire. At least the Bushmaster was visible in the spotting scopes and the rifle-scopes. My BORS gave me the range and the wind was directly on our backs. About 450 rounds later (our rounds, not theirs) they stopped firing. We waited patiently for them to resume, but it was just more harassing fire and they didn't fire again. They did hit some of the fighting positions but the sandbags were 5 layers deep. We climbed down after a while and began filling and replacing sandbags.

“Do you want to go hit them for a second time?”

“I think not, it’s a poor idea.”

“Why?”

“*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.* These guys are too smart to fall for it a second time. I have to assume that they’ve placed guys around their compound about 3 clicks out. If we go in, they can come up behind us and it will be Katie bar the door.”

“How long do you intend to endure this?”

“For as long as it takes or we get an opening. They’re down at least 5 people, while we’re intact. That cannon they have didn’t give them any kind of break, not with the berm as thick as it is.”

“This could get old. What about the livestock, won’t they rustle them?”

“I was giving some thought to moving them inside the compound. It would mean scooping the manure and composting it for use in the garden, but they wouldn’t be able to steal the livestock.”

“It wouldn’t keep them out of the greenhouse.”

“We have a watch over the greenhouse and dry lot. The greenhouse is lighted 24/7.”

“Well, they could steal our tankers and eventually, our lights would be out for lack of fuel.”

“The tankers are parked next to the greenhouse. That reminds me, we have an empty tanker, how about we go for a refill?”

“Do you have an answer for everything?”

“Not really but we put a lot of thought into the construction of what we have. Marty and I have the construction experience and Carol and you have the military experience. The last year before the bubble went up, Marty and I spent full time building shelters and saw how they were stocked. IMHO, there are two kinds of people remaining, those who prepared and those who just got lucky. Carol and you had a basement shelter, you prepared. Even though Obama grabbed the guns and limited ammo sales, there were people like Mr. Harris who found a way to circumvent the new laws. Since most of the shelter customers were friends of his, he probably armed them. As a class III dealer selling only to police departments, he could get anything he wanted.”

## Goals – Chapter 15

“How did he equip his security force?”

“I think, don’t really know for sure, they were reserve Deputy Sheriff’s. I do know that he and the Sheriff were friends and he contributed to the Sheriff’s political fund raising and each of those security people did the same, probably using his money. They could have given the Sheriff close to \$40,000, directly or indirectly. Besides, those security people would have made great reserve deputies. Harris could have paid for any training they needed to qualify for a Deputy position, with them on his payroll.”

“What you’re saying is that where there is a will, there is a way, regardless of any limitations placed on people?”

“That sums it up nicely.”

“I’ll tell you this much, unless we find some way to even the odds, we’re in over our heads. You said it wouldn’t be a good idea to attack them a second time, right? How about we turn the table and do the same to them, place some of us beyond the position they’re attacking from and attack them from the rear?”

“That might work, with one condition.”

“What condition?”

“We give them no quarter and bury the bodies deep.”

“No quarter? Fine by me.”

“Understand, if even one of them gets away, that will end use of that plan.”

“Ted, Bob and you are overlooking the upside.”

“What upside?”

“We may end up with two more M82A1Ms plus whatever other arms they’re carrying, like the Kimber pistols and maybe some H&K rifles.”

“Don’t forget, they also have 6 Super Match M1As.”

“I think that once we get this group off our back, we may have relatively clear sailing. You said you only had one other group attack, right?”

“Right and we buried them deep.”

“If we reduce Harris’s security force enough, I think they’ll stop attacking because he’ll hold them back to protect his compound. We’ve taken out five? If we can take out 11 more, our problems may be solved. He’d be better off spending his remaining resources on protection and getting livestock from a different source.”

In the end we went with the idea of turnabout is fair play. We placed six people out beyond their usual position and we were well hidden, just in case. The last attack came a few days later with them moving into position just before dawn. There were 8 of them, two armed with Barrett’s and two armed with the M1A sniper rifles. The last four were armed with HK-417s and all carried the Kimber pistols.

They moved right past our positions and when the first shot was fired, we came out of our concealment and took all 8 out with .30 caliber fire. We gathered up our spoils of war and returned to our compound. We took the tractor with the backhoe and bucket mounted and dug a slit trench which was filled with the stripped bodies. One little mistake had cost 8 of the best theirs lives. This action reduced Harris’s security force to twenty-three. Would that be the last of it? Or would he just get more angry and waste more lives? Only time would tell.

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The attacks stopped and we assumed that Harris had moved on to greener pastures. It would later prove to be a flawed assumption. The word came that there was rustling going on in the area, beef, horse, hogs and even chicken. We assumed that this was Harris and his troops replenishing their stocks of food. No one was ever caught and there was no proof, one way or the other.

Bob and I rearranged what remained of our minefield, doing our best to fill in the gaps created by Harris’s people. It wasn’t any kind of standard pattern and the mines were fewer and further between, but our only source of more mines, Harris, wasn’t available, so we made do.

When spring came we planted the 30 acres in 5 acres of oats, 10 acres of wheat, 10 acres of beans and 5 acres of rice. We doubled the garden, planting our heirloom seeds and everything produced bumper crops. With no more attacks, we were able to refill our tanker and keep the tanks topped off. The greenhouse was used to grow the small crops, like lettuce, cabbage, etc. By the end of the season, we were standing in tall cotton. We had acquired enough canning jars that we would have had less to sell at the farmers market but for the bumper crop.

The Texas National Guard had finally arrived, done a census and left a detachment in Midland to supplement the local law enforcement. To conserve fuel, we were now riding horses around our 80 acre spread, checking the fences and what not. Word came on the amateur bands that the National Guard had gone up against a group of rustlers and had come out much worse for the wear.

From the various versions of what had happened, we pieced together our own story. Two squads of National Guard had come upon 6-8 rustlers. The Guard, feeling that they had the rustlers outnumbered and outgunned, had attacked the rustlers only to take 75% casualties to one of the rustlers being wounded. The first thought that popped in our heads was *Who Dares Wins* (SAS) followed by *De oppresso liber* (US Special Forces), *The Only Easy Day Was Yesterday* (SEALS) and *Celer, Silens, Mortalis* Marines. Six to eight Special Forces would have two squads of National Guard outnumbered 3 or 4 to one.

We stayed out of it; Harris's people were now the problem of the National Guard. Were they to ask, I'd tell them to call for reinforcements. We did learn that channel 1 and channel 2 of the pre-programmed frequency hopping channels were used by the National Guard so we could hear both sides because Harris was on channel 6. The reason behind that decision was that we too had some of those illegal weapons, having acquired many as the spoils of war. At best, they'd seize the firearms and illegal ammo and at worst, they'd seize us too. And since Mary was expecting for a fourth time, I wanted to stay close to home.

Our fourth and final child was Theodore Matthew, Jr., 8 pounds 14 ounces, 21". The doctor advised Mary to get her tubes tied and she agreed. After long use, the diapers were beginning to become threadbare. Mr. Harris and his bunch never came back but only because they couldn't. The next time they came up against the Guard, the Guard had a full company of Infantry against their 8 people. The Guard waterboarded the only captive and he sang like Caruso.

The Guard used M58 MICLICs and cleared enough of the minefield to successfully assault the stronghold. Once it is detonated, the line charge clears a lane measuring 8 meters by 100 meters. They didn't seize everything, just the people, guns and ammo. When we learned of the assault, we went over and got into the shelter where we got the Harris radio, the Yaesu equipment, the antennas and the guns and ammo stored in the armory. We could have taken more mines, but didn't. We'd seen what a mine could do to someone and were considering pulling our minefield and storing the mines. We could do that because the safety clips to the mines were in the armory.

The other thing in the shelter, that the Guard hadn't even discovered, was all that LTS food. We took that and sold it for pennies on the dollar at the Farmer's Market. We felt we couldn't just give the food away, that would raise eyebrows; but selling it cheap because it *was getting old* didn't. Of course the whole idea behind LTS food is that it doesn't age that fast. Plus we refilled our supplies before disposing of the remainder. We had a two year supply for everyone in our compound, including Ted Jr.

Eventually, we did pull the minefield and erected a barn for the livestock. Eighty acres might not seem like a lot of land, but it met our needs and then some. We opened one side of the berm and expanded it to allow more room for additional homes. We also recovered Mr. Harris generators and fuel tanks, installing them inside our new, expanded compound. If Biden or whomever followed him ever made a national announcement, we

never heard it. We all voted for the other guy anyway. We could now store a maximum of 175,000-gallons of diesel fuel and produce more power than we needed.

Moving those tanks was a tremendous amount of work, but that's a story for another time. Our compound was now large enough so that each of the children could have their own singlewide when the time came. Our commercial sized septic system would handle all those trailers and more, if required.

We acquired and planted fruit and nut trees, dwarf varieties. I do believe our children grew faster than the trees. We had to add an additional well for the garden and a third, larger well for our field crops. Once things settled down, we put up our military style arms and resorted to wearing cowboy guns which were legal.

## **Goals – Epilogue**

And, now you know. One small determined group with limited military skills managed to hold off a larger group of special operators. They did it through patience and by learning from their enemy. They limited their salvage to the bare minimum, but did in fact salvage. They shared/sold what they could spare to those in their local community doing their part in the recovery albeit only a small part.

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